PRINCIPLES OF ETHICS

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BY

PHANIBHUSHAN CHATTERJI, M. A., B. L.,

SENIOR PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY, (RETD.), CITY COLLEGE, CALCUTTA ;
SOMETIME PROFESSOR, SCOTTISH CHURCH COLLEGE, CALCUTTA ;
AUTHOR OF "OUTLINES OF GENERAL PHILOSOPHY" ;
EXAMINER, CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY.

"Morality is the proper science and business of mankind in general."
JOHN LOCKE.

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TO

MY PRECEPTOR

DR. HENRY STEPHEN,

TO WHOSE INSTRUCTION AND GUIDANCE

I OWE MY FIRST KNOWLEDGE OF PHILOSOPHY,

THIS TREATISE

IS GRATEFULLY DEDICATED.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

The present work has grown out of lectures delivered to my pupils. It is thus adapted to the requirements of students preparing for the B. A. Examination in Philosophy as conducted by the Calcutta University. Hence the topics have been arranged in it, as far as possible, according to the syllabus fixed for that examination. Of the text-books on Ethics commonly used by students, some are too sketchy to be of much use to them ; others, again, are too bulky and not suited to their capacity. This book tries to overcome these defects. It is written in a plain style and covers the entire ground included in the syllabus. But, though intended mainly for the use of students, it is not a book of the sort that encourages cramming or superficiality. It tries to give as comprehensive a view of each topic as is permitted by its limited space.

Writing from the Idealistic standpoint, I am deeply indebted to the recent writers of the Idealistic school, whose works I have freely consulted. The treatment, however, is, in the main, independent. I may add here that I have generally mentioned in proper places the names of the writers consulted or quoted, so far as I have been able to remember them.

If the following pages at all help the beginners in grasping the fundamental principles of Ethics, I shall consider my labour amply rewarded.

CALCUTTA, 1916. — P. B. CHATTERJI.

PREFACE TO THE EIGHTH EDITION.

In the present edition the book has been slightly enlarged in bulk by the insertion of new matter. It has been subjected to a careful revision, and additions and alterations have been made wherever they have appeared desirable; but the original plan has been strictly adhered to.

As pointed out in the preface to the first edition. the standpoint adopted in this treatise is idealistic or eudæmonistic. I have fully explained and examined the principal ethical theories and have tried to show that the doctrine of Eudæmonism, rightly interpreted, reconciles all the conflicting views of morality and incorporates into itself all that is true and essential in them. The book, so far as possible within the prescribed limits, is a complete exposition of the subject of Ethics. Every important topic has been fully discussed in it, and every care has been taken to make it easy and interesting.

My indebtedness to other writers has been generally acknowledged in proper places. I may add here that the treatment of the subject is, in the main, independent.

The fact that the work has already passed through a number of editions proves its usefulness and popularity; and I hope that the improvements made in this edition will render it still more useful and popular.

I take this opportunity to thank cordially those learned professors of Philosophy who have kindly recommended the book to their pupils.

CALCUTTA,
MAY, 1927.

P. B. CHATTERJI.

PREFACE TO THE NINTH EDITION.

In the present edition the book has again been thoroughly revised, and additions and alterations have been made here and there.

CALCUTTA,
JUNE, 1929.

P. B. CHATTERJI.

PREFACE TO THE TENTH EDITION.

In this edition the book has again been carefully revised, and many additions and alterations have been made. Appendix A contains University questions of several years, and Appendix B is supplementary to the text. It is hoped that the improvements effected in this edition will enhance the usefulness and popularity of the book.

My thanks are due to those learned professors of Philosophy who have kindly recommended the treatise to their pupils.

CALCUTTA,
JULY, 1935.

P. B. CHATTERJI.

PREFACE TO THE ELEVENTH EDITION.

The issue of a new edition has afforded me an opportunity for thoroughly revising the treatise and making material additions and alterations. Appendix A contains University questions, and Appendix B supplies much additional matter to the readers. The book as a whole has been considerably improved; and I hope it will now prove more useful to students preparing for the B. A. Examinations (Pass and Honours) of the Indian Universities, especially of the University of Calcutta.

CALCUTTA,
JUNE, 1940.

P. B. CHATTERJI.

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PRINCIPLES
OF
ETHICS.

CHAPTER I.

DEFINITION, PROVINCE AND END OF ETHICS.

§ 1. **Definition of Ethics.** Ethics may be briefly defined as "the science of morality" or as "the study of right conduct or duty." It is the science which explains the facts of moral life and indicates the course in which human activities *should be* directed. It is essentially an investigation into the notions of *good* and *bad*, *right* and *wrong*, and the connected notion of *duty*, as applied to conduct or voluntary action.

We see, then, that Ethics is concerned with the rightness and wrongness of *conduct*. But conduct is the exponent of *character*, and is good or bad, right or wrong, only as revealing a *character*. In other words, the conduct of a man springs out of, and expresses his character, and is good or bad according as his character is good or bad (*Vide* Ch. XXIII, § 1). Hence Ethics may also be defined as 'the science of moral character as expressing itself in right or wrong conduct or action', or as 'the science which deals with the goodness and badness of human character and seeks to determine the ideally perfect type of character which it is the duty of all men to strive to realise within themselves.' Indeed, the derivative meaning of Ethics is "science of character."*

* The English word 'Ethics' (corresponding to the Greek word *ethica*) is derived from the Greek word *ethos* meaning character. The synonymous expression 'moral science' or 'moral philosophy' means the science or philosophy of the *mores*, which signifies in Latin, primarily, customs or habits, secondarily, the habits of moral agents in respect of moral action, *i. e.*, character.

Again, as the ideas of rightness and obligation combined suggest the idea of an *ultimate end* or *highest good* to which actions must be conducive in order to be right and obligatory, and which is, therefore, the ultimate standard of moral judgment, Ethics is sometimes defined as an "enquiry into the nature of the ultimate end of human action—the highest good of man—and the means of attaining it."* (*Vide* Ch. XI & XV).

Ethics is also considered as 'an investigation of the true moral laws or rational precepts of conduct.' A little reflection shows that this is substantially the same as the definition given in the preceding paragraph. For, the several moral laws are regulative principles which must be regarded as the means of attaining the highest end of life. They are the paths towards the highest good of man. (*Vide* Ch. V, § 5 & Ch. XI, § 1).

Thus it may be said that Ethics is the study which deals with the moral ideal or standard—the supreme good or chief end of human activity, and with those laws or regulative principles by conformity to which the supreme good is attained.

§ 2. **Nature of the science of Ethics.** We see, then, that Ethics investigates the standard or ideal by reference to which conduct is pronounced to be right or evil. The fact that Ethics deals with an end, ideal or standard and with regulative principles, serves to mark it off from sciences like Physics, Biology and Psychology. These belong to the class of positive, natural or descriptive sciences, while Ethics, like Logic and Æsthetics, belongs to the class of normative or regulative sciences. There are two types or groups of sciences—(1) the group of theoretical, positive, natural or descriptive sciences, and

* As we shall see later on, the end of life is an ideal of character to be realised by the individual, and his attitude to it is one of obligation or duty to realise it. It is to be sought within, not without.

(2) the group of normative, appreciative or regulative sciences. The sciences of the former group seek to discover the actual or phenomenal order—the order that characterises matters of fact; the sciences of the latter group seek to transcend the actual and to judge its value in terms of the ideal. The former deal with judgments of *fact* or judgments of what *is* (*factual* judgments); the latter deal with judgments of *worth* or *value* or judgments of what *ought to be* (*critical* judgments). In short, the former may be called sciences of the actual, dealing with positive or natural laws; the latter are sciences of the ideal and deal with regulative principles. Now, Ethics is the 'science of the ideal in conduct'. It is concerned with the regulative principles of conduct—principles that urge upon the self the duty of obedience to them. It is concerned with judgments of *value* or what *ought to be*. It is not concerned so much with the question what the nature of conduct or voluntary action *is*, as with the question what our actions *ought to be* in order that they may be conducive to our highest good. Ethics, therefore, is a normative science. It is also called a regulative science, because it seeks to define the standard which should *regulate* our conduct.

Ethics is further described as a practical science. But the term 'practical', as applied to the science of Ethics, has been objected to by some writers. Thus, Prof. Mackenzie, while holding that Ethics is a normative science, says that it is not to be called a practical science. "It must content itself," says he, "with understanding the nature of the ideal, and must not hope to formulate rules for its attainment. It is important to observe that the description of Ethics as normative does not involve the view that it has any direct bearing on practice * *. It discusses the ideal of goodness and is not directly concerned with the means by which this ideal of goodness may be

realised. Ethics, therefore, though a normative science, is not to be regarded as a practical science." (Manual of Ethics, pages 9 & 10).

Prof. Muirhead, again, remarks, "Ethics is sometimes distinguished from natural sciences on the ground that it is practical, while they are theoretic. On examination, however, the distinction is found to be a superficial one." He admits that "it is true, indeed, that Ethics stands nearer to our every day life than do, for instance, Astronomy and Physiology." "But", he continues, "this does not carry us far. For it may be easily shown that as a science Ethics is just as theoretic as Astronomy or Physiology, while, as furnishing the basis for the scientific practice of arts, *e. g.*, of navigation or healing, these sciences are just as practical as Ethics." (The Elements of Ethics, pp. 32-33).

It may, however, be said in reply that, since Ethics is concerned with activity or practice and indicates the course in which human activities should be directed,—since it embraces knowledge which is of vital importance for the proper regulation of life, it may be called in this sense a practical science. As Prof. Seth very aptly remarks, "Ethics is often called practical, as opposed to theoretical philosophy or metaphysics. The description is correct if it is meant that Ethics is the philosophy or theory of practice." (Ethical Principles, page 6). "It is impossible to separate theory from practice. As Aristotle insisted, the abiding interest of the moralist is practical as well as theoretical * * *Moral insight* is the necessary condition of *moral life*, and the philosophy which deepens such insight is at once theoretical and practical, in its interest and in its value." (*Ibid*, pages 8 & 9). *

* Though Prof. Mackenzie draws a line of distinction between normative and practical sciences, the distinction cannot be regarded as an absolute one. For, the definition of the *ideal* (which is said to be the business of a normative science) inevitably leads to an attempt to formulate rules and devise means for its attainment (which is the business of a practical science).

(For a complete discussion of the views of Profs. Mackenzie and Muirhead, see Appendix B at the end of this book).

§ 3. **Scope or Province of Ethics.** By the scope of Ethics we mean the range of its subject-matter, *i e.*, the particular subjects with which it deals as a science. Now, Ethics as the science of morality studies the contents or elements of moral consciousness, *viz.*, *the ideas of rightness and wrongness, of moral obligation and responsibility, of merit and demerit, and of virtue and vice, together with the sentiments or emotions arising in the mind from these.* These are the special objects of Ethical study. (For a complete analysis of moral consciousness, *vide* Ch. V). Indeed, the various problems which Ethics seeks to solve arise in the process of analysing and explaining moral consciousness or consciousness of right and wrong. We may point out here the more important Ethical problems :—

(*a*) Ethics is primarily concerned with the *moral attributes of rightness and wrongness.* It deals with *moral judgments* or the judgments of *right and wrong.* Now, in connection with moral judgment, several important questions arise, *viz.*, the questions of the *object, faculty* and *standard* of moral judgment, and Ethics has to answer them.

But the most important question with regard to moral judgment is that of the moral *standard* by which we judge actions and habits of action. The most fundamental and ultimate question in Ethics is: What are the exact meanings of the terms 'right' and 'wrong' as applied to human actions ? What do we mean when we say that an act is right or wrong ? In what does the rightness or wrongness of an action consist ? And this is equivalent to the question : What is it that enables us to characterise an act as right or wrong ? What is the true *standard* of right and wrong ? (This, again, leads to the question of the *ultimate end* or

the *highest good,* to which our actions should be conducive in order that they may be right).

(*b*) Again, the consciousness of right and wrong is accompanied by the consciousness of '*oughtness*', *duty* or *moral obligation* When we are aware of what is right as distinguished from what is wrong, we are aware at the same time that it is our *duty* to do what is right to the exclusion of what is wrong. We judge that what is right is *obligatory* or *binding* upon us or that we *ought* to do what is right and avoid what is wrong—or, as it is sometimes put, we feel that we are subject to *Moral Law.* As Kant says, there is no meaning in 'right' unless it involves the 'ought.' (*Duties,* again, in one person imply *moral rights* in some others, *e.g.,* the *duties* of children imply *rights* of parents). Thus the ideas of obligation or duty and rights come within the scope of Ethics. Hence some other important Ethical questions are : What is it that makes certain actions *obligatory* or *binding* upon us ? What is the nature of moral obligation ? What is the source of moral authority ?

(*c*) But, again, the notions of rightness and obligatoriness are related to other notions, such as those of merit and responsibility, so that these also fall within the scope of Ethics. Thus we approve of the conduct of an agent who does what is right and disapprove of the conduct of one who does the opposite, and we say that the agent possesses moral *merit* or *demerit* according as he does what is right or wrong. We further say that a rational agent is *responsible* for his actions.

Hence some other Ethical problems are : —What do we understand by merit, demerit and responsibility ? How are the different degrees of merit and demerit to be judged ?

(*d*) Moreover, we judge a person as *virtuous* or *vicious* according as he has a dominant tendency or inclination to perform right or wrong actions. Virtue and vice, therefore, are other topics which require consideration in Ethics.

(*e*) Finally, moral sentiments—the feelings arising in the mind in connection with moral ideas and judgments—have a place in Ethics, and such questions as the nature and origin of moral sentiments and the relation of moral sentiments to moral judgments are discussed in it.

We have indicated above the scope of Ethics. Its primary task is to define the moral ideal by reference to which moral facts may be explained. Its secondary task is to lay out a scheme of concrete duties. (What is called 'Applied Ethics' has for its task the application of moral principles to concrete cases for the determination of duties and improvement of character).

It should be remembered that Ethics, in its attempt to define the highest good of man, has indirectly to treat of several problems which are psychological, philosophical, sociological and political in nature. The psychological problems with which Ethics is concerned are those of the nature of voluntary action, classification of the springs of action and freedom of will; the philosophical and metaphysical problems are those of the essential nature of human personality, man's place in the universe, freedom of will, immortality of soul, and existence and nature of God ; the sociological problem is that of the relation of the individual to society ; and the political problem is that of the relation of the individual to the state. These problems connect Ethics with the respective departments of knowledge to which they properly belong.

§ 4. **End and utility of Ethics.** We are now in a position to understand the *end* or object aimed at by Ethics. The end of Ethics is to discover and define the supreme end of life and to indicate the means by which it may be realised, and thus to teach us the spirit in which our lives *ought* to be lived. Thus Ethics has both a theoretical and a practical aim. In other words, Ethics aims at bringing the nature of the highest good to clear consciousness and guiding and helping us in attaining it.

From the foregoing considerations it is clear that Ethics is a highly useful branch of learning. It gives us a true moral insight which is the essential condition of moral life. The Socratic maxim 'knowledge is virtue' is not altogether groundless. Ethics criticises the popular moral notions and existing social institutions and exposes their errors, inconsistencies and defects and places on a secure foundation valid moral ideas and principles. It thus leads to the proper estimate of moral acts and lessens the possibilities of wrong actions. It prepares the way for virtuous lives by enabling men to know and do what is right.

As Gizycki and Coit very aptly remark, "Ethical philosophy fixes the means of testing the goodness or perfection of the moral ideas which actually prevail and of the established regulations of the law; it thereby puts us into a position to improve custom and law, to bring these nearer to the ideal pattern, that is, to custom and law as they ought to be—as they would be if they were in accord with the highest standard of all worth. Therefore the legislator who wishes to improve the actual regulations of the state, may learn from Ethics what the highest standard of good is. Also it will furnish counsel to the individual in the conduct of his own life and enlighten his conscience, so that he may judge and rule aright both his own actions, wishes and thoughts and those of his fellowmen."

Thus the importance of Ethics in the courses of studies can hardly be overestimated. It is a science for all, in as much as every one is in need of guidance and enlightenment, but it is particularly useful to ministers of religion, statesmen, jurists and teachers. As Fowler remarks, "The study of the grounds and principles of morals is not one of those branches of science which merely gratify a barren curiosity; it is a living and fruitful subject which ever has been, and ever will be, fraught with the most important results to the highest interests of mankind." (The Principles of Morals, p. 22).

NOTES.

Note 1. Meaning of the term 'science'. Is Ethics a science? The term 'science' in the wider sense means any form of systematic study aiming at the attainment of knowledge or truth. In the narrower sense, it means merely the study of a particular group of *natural phenomena* as distinguished from the *noumena* or realities (soul, matter, God). A science in the narrower sense avoids metaphysical questions. But a complete system of Ethics cannot wholly avoid Metaphysics. (*Vide* Ch. II, § 4). Hence Ethics is *not* a science in the *narrower sense*; but it *is* a science, if we take the term 'science' in the wider or more comprehensive sense.

We see, then, that Ethics may rightly be defined as the *science of morality* or as *moral science*. It is no doubt true that, as a normative study, Ethics is closely related to 'ultimate Philosophy' or Metaphysics. Hence it is sometimes called, by preference, moral *philosophy* rather than moral *science*. As Prof. Seth remarks, "The fact that it is the genius and function of the normative sciences to transcend the actual, and to judge its value in terms of the ideal, doubtless brings these sciences nearer than the natural sciences to metaphysics or ultimate philosophy." But, as we have seen above, the term *science* may be used in a wide sense to include the philosophical studies as well as those that are called scientific in the narrower sense. Ethics, therefore, may be called a science.

Prof. Seth observes that "a normative science is not strictly to be identified with metaphysics for three reasons. First, it agrees with common sense in assuming the validity of the judgments of value, whose system it is seeking to construct. Secondly, it abstracts one set of judgments of value—the logical or the æsthetic or the ethical—from the rest of the judgments of value. Thirdly, it abstracts the judgments of value from the judgments of fact.

"Now, it is the business of metaphysics to investigate the ultimate validity of the judgments of value, as well as of the

judgments of fact; and, in order to determine this, it must study these judgments in their relation both to one another and to the judgments of fact." (Ethical Principles, p. 34).

Nevertheless, Seth is careful to point out that "the science of Ethics must have for its complement metaphysics of Ethics." (*Ibid*, p. 353).

Note 2. Scope of Ethics. As questions of duty are always to be decided by reference to concrete circumstances, it may be said that the science of Ethics, properly so called, is not concerned with the individual acts or qualities in their concrete variety. In other words, it may be said that Ethics as a science has nothing to do with details and that its task is to enquire into universal moral principles. As Prof. Mackenzie remarks, "While we must insist that it is not the task of Ethics to furnish us with copy-book headings for the guidance of life, we must equally insist that it *is* its task to furnish us with practical principles—to bring the nature of the highest good to clear consciousness and to indicate the general nature of the means by which this good is to be attained. It thus tells us, not indeed the particular rules by which our lives are to be guided, but, what is of infinitely greater practical importance, the spirit in which our lives are to be lived. * Ethics *does* interpret for us the meaning and importance of some more special rules. But assuredly neither Ethics nor anything else will tell a man what in particular he is to do. All action that is of much consequence has reference to concrete situations which could not possibly be exhausted by any abstract methods of analysis. It is the special business of every human being to find out for himself what he is to do and to do it. Ethics only instructs him where to look for it, and helps him to see why it is worth while to find it and to do it. Like all sciences, it leaves its principles in the end to be applied by the instructed good sense of mankind". (Manual of Ethics, pp. 350-351).

CHAPTER II.

Relation of Ethics to Other Sciences.

§ 1. **Ethics and Psychology.** We have seen before that Ethics deals with the rightness of conduct, just as Logic deals with the correctness of thought. In other words, Ethics considers the voluntary actions of rational beings with reference to their rightness or wrongness. It seeks to ascertain what form of conduct is good or right, and what form of conduct is bad or wrong. Hence it presupposes an understanding of the nature of conduct or voluntary action. We cannot determine what is right or wrong in voluntary actions without first determining scientifically what a voluntary act *is*, and, therefore, what emotion, desire and volition *are*, out of which it springs; and the treatment of these comes within the province of Psychology, the science of mind. In fact, various questions, in which Ethics, as the science of morality, is interested, such as the questions of freedom of will, the relation of desire to pleasure, the classification of the springs of action, the influence of reason upon action, are all essentially psychological.

Thus Ethics is closely connected with Psychology. Indeed, moral enquiry must always be conducted on a psychological basis—it requires at every step a careful examination of the facts of consciousness. If, for instance, we seek to solve the problem whether moral judgment is passed upon the motive or the consequences of an action, or to determine the significance of duty, the nature of the moral standard, the character of conscience &c., in every case a careful psychological study of the facts of consciousness is absolutely necessary.

As Dr. Sidgwick observes, "Almost all ethical schools would agree that the main object of their investigation must belong to the psychical side of human life; whether (1) they

hold that man's ultimate end is to be found in psychical existence regarded as merely sentient and emotional, identifying it with some species of desirable feeling or pleasure, or the genus or sum of such feelings; or whether (2) they rather maintain that the well-being of the mind must lie solely or chiefly in the quality of its activity—its virtue. And when we attempt to work out either view into a clear and complete system, we are led inevitably to further psychological study, either (1) in order to examine different kinds and degrees of pleasure and pain or (2) to determine the nature and mutual relations of the different virtues or good qualities of character and their opposites. * * Thus in various ways ethical questions lead inevitably to psychological discussions; in fact, we may say that all important ethical notions are also psychological; except perhaps the fundamental antitheses of 'good' and 'bad', 'right' and 'wrong' with which Psychology, as it treats of what *is* and not of what *ought to be*, is not directly concerned." (Outlines of the History of Ethics, pp. 4-6).

What, then, is the distinction between the two sciences? In the first place, Psychology is wider than Ethics, for Psychology studies all the three classes of mental phenomena, intellectual, emotional and volitional, while Ethics is practically confined to the department of will or volition. Secondly, Psychology is a 'science of the *actual*', while Ethics is a 'science of the *ideal*'; Psychology deals with positive laws governing mental phenomena; Ethics deals with regulative principles of conduct; Psychology aims at determining what the nature of conduct or voluntary action *is*, Ethics aims at determining what our conduct *should be*. As Dr. Stout remarks, "Ethics inquires how we ought to will, not how we actually do will...Psychology deals with the process of volition as it actually occurs, without reference to its rightness or wrongness." (Manual of Psychology, p. 6). In short, Psychology is a positive or theoretical science,

whereas Ethics is a normative and practical science rising out of Psychology.*

Thus Ethics differs considerably from Psychology. While Psychology, as a positive science, studies all the facts of conscious life for the sake of theoretical knowledge merely, Ethics, as a normative and regulative science, seeks to explain the facts of moral life by reference to an ideal or standard and also to teach us how we *ought* to live. Moral facts are, no doubt, *mental* facts or phenomena, and as such they come within the province of Psychology ; but Psychology studies them *simply as mental phenomena, and not as moral facts*—that is to say, it studies them without any reference to their moral significance. Ethics, again, "in elucidating the facts of our moral life, takes into account other connected mental processes ; but these are considered only by reference to their moral bearing and not merely as psychical phenomena." (Prof. A. C. Mitra, Elements of morals, p. 49).

§ 2. **Ethics and Sociology.** By Sociology is meant the science of society—the science which treats of the constitution and development of social groups. It is the study "which investigates and describes the habits, manners, customs and institutions of human society in all its stages of development, from the savage state to the civilized, trying at the same time to discover how they have originated and developed from form to form and stage to stage, until they have grown into the different forms which we now find

* It may be pointed out in this connection that Psychology, as a theoretical enquiry, gives rise to three normative and practical offshoots corresponding to the three functions of mind—(i) Psychology of feeling gives rise to the normative science of Æsthetics which is concerned with the standard of beauty ; (ii) Psychology of cognition or thinking leads up to Logic, which is concerned with the standard of truth ; (iii) Psychology of volition, to Ethics or Moral Science which is concerned with the standard of right and wrong.

in the world." (First Principles of Moral Science by Prof. H. Stephen).

Ethics is closely related to Sociology. The study of conduct leads us necessarily to the study of social life. It is not possible to understand the moral constitution of man without considering his relation to society. Man is essentially a social being. His conduct has always a direct or indirect reference to the social order to which he belongs. His individual well-being is bound up with the well-being of society. Indeed, an individual apart from society is a mere abstraction. As Dr. Sidgwick remarks, "We only know the individual as a member of some society; what we call his virtues are chiefly exhibited in his dealings with his fellows, and his most prominent pleasures are derived from intercourse with them; thus it is a paradox to maintain that man's highest good is independent of his social relations, or of the constitution and condition of the community of which he forms a part" (Article on Ethics in the Encyclopædia Britannica, 9th edition). In short, the moral and social aspects of human nature being inseparable, moral and social problems are implicated in one another.

Thus the relation of Ethics to Sociology is a very intimate one; and this relation follows from the essentially social nature of man and the consequent kinship of individual good with social good. As we shall see later on, the relation in which individuals stand to society is an *organic* one, so that individual progress and social progress are correlative and the highest good for the individual is a *common* or *social* good (*Vide* Ch. XX).

It should be borne in mind that the science of Ethics starts from the data supplied by Sociology. The history of the social customs, laws and institutions furnishes important materials for ethical speculation. Indeed, "Sociology, as a science of the actual, becomes significant by reference to

Ethics which supplies the ideal," for the task of the former is simply to record the gradual social changes, while the latter *interprets* these changes by reference to the moral ideal or the highest good. "It is of the highest importance that the nature of this end, ideal or good should be determined before we can interpret the social process as one of development or progress, just as it is necessary to know the goal of a traveller's journey before we can say whether he is advancing or receding along his road".

What, then, are the points of difference between Ethics and Sociology ?

(i) In the first place, Sociology is an *objective* mental science, studying *objective* mental products—customs, laws and institutions. Ethics is rather a *subjective* mental science, as it deals directly with the subjective processes of mind—its desires, dispositions and volitions, and pronounces moral judgment upon them.

(ii) Sociology studies men *collectively* as constituting social groups, and the *collective* products of minds. Ethics is concerned rather with 'the *workings* of the *individual* mind'.

(iii) Sociology is a positive or descriptive science, while Ethics is a normative one, for, as said above, the former gives an account of the constitution and development of society—it describes the changes which the customs, laws and institutions of society have undergone in the process of time ; but the latter, as the science of the moral ideal, *interprets* these social changes by reference to the moral ideal.

(iv) Hence Sociology is a purely theoretical enquiry—it is of speculative interest merely ; Ethics has a practical value, because it enables us to determine what the dispositions and actions (and thereby the products also) of mind *should be*—it puts us into a position to improve custom and law and to bring them nearer to the ideal pattern.

§ 3. **Ethics and Politics.** By Politics is meant the science of government—the science which treats of its structure and functions. It is a normative and practical enquiry, dealing with the question "how the actions of the community should be deliberately regulated by laws and institutions, for the end of safety and material prosperity." In other words, it aims at controlling human activity for human welfare.

It is easy to see now that Ethics and Politics agree in certain respects. They are both normative, regulative and practical sciences. They both deal with human conduct and they both rise out of Sociology.

But if Politics and Ethics agree thus far, they also *differ* in many points. The main points of difference are noticed below :—

(i) In the first place, Politics is rather *objective*, inasmuch as it primarily takes into account *outward acts and their consequences in their bearing on public good.* Ethics is essentially a *subjective* science, as it goes much deeper and pronounces moral judgment upon the *intentions* which give rise to voluntary actions.

This point is very well explained and illustrated by Prof. Muirhead in the following words :—"Political law takes account of such visible effects as theft of property, neglect of wife and children &c. On the other hand, the invisible things of the mind are recognised by most civilised governments as outside of their sphere. Morality regulates the inward motive and disposition as well as the outward effect —the conduct of the understanding and the imagination as well as conduct towards property and children. It says not only 'thou shalt not steal,' 'thou shalt not kill,' but 'think no evil,' 'Flee vain and foolish imaginations'." (The Elements of Ethics, p. 38).

(ii) Politics chiefly deals with the collective actions of men—the joint or the united acts of the members of a

community, and with the actions of individuals only in so far as they affect collective welfare. Ethics chiefly deals with the voluntary acts of *individuals* and the desires and intentions within their minds, out of which the acts arise.

(iii) Again, it is generally pointed out that Politics and Ethics differ with regard to their *standards*. The standard of Politics is one of *expediency*, while the standard of Ethics is one of *moral rightness*. Politics seeks to determine what forms of action are *useful*, *advantageous* or *beneficial* to the community, *i.e.*, conducive to general prosperity and welfare. Ethics seeks to determine what is *morally right*. Now, what is expedient is not necessarily right. A line of action may be *advantageous* to a community, and yet it may be *morally wrong*. In other words, it may be good from the political point of view, though morally bad.* Thus the standards of the two sciences are different.

(iv) Ethics is of *higher authority* than Politics. Ethics claims to sit in judgment upon political law. It is now generally admitted that Ethics is the highest science regulating all other sciences which seek to influence and guide human conduct, and that, therefore, the regulative science of Politics is, or should be, subject to Ethics. Modern civilised states always *claim* that their political laws and measures are based on moral principles (whether they are really so based or not), and thus tacitly acknowledge the superiority of the moral standard over the political.

(v) Lastly, there is this important difference. *Their laws are carried out and ends realised in altogether different ways.* Political laws are externally imposed—that is to say, imposed by the state upon the people for general

* The tendency of modern Politics is to regard expediency as subject to moral law and to enforce those lines of action that are *beneficial to the state* and at the same time *morally right*.

welfare and enforced by penalties. *But moral laws as* such must be self-imposed—that is to say, must be imposed by the rational individual upon himself and freely and intelligently obeyed by him for their own sake, and not from any fear of punishment or constraint, if he is to attain virtue. If political laws derive their binding force from a duly appointed system of punishments, moral laws are impaired by any association with these. Moral conduct consists in freely doing what is right from the conviction that it *is* right. If, for instance, a person refrains from committing a crime simply because he knows very well that, by committing it, he will most probably be punished, his conduct does not show any moral excellence of his nature. As Prof. Muirhead says, "The man who abstains merely because owing to the state of the law he cannot get liquor is obviously not moral. A distinguished churchman is said to have remarked to the late Professor Thorold Rogers 'we must have compulsory religion, because otherwise we shall have none at all', to which the Professor replied he didn't see the difference. The same might be said of compulsory morality; it is equivalent to no morality at all." (The Elements of Ethics, pp. 38-39.)

But though there is so much difference between the two sciences, we must bear in mind that they are closely related. Man is endowed with moral attributes, and is also, as Aristotle observes, 'a political animal.' Even in the simplest communities he participates in a common life which is subject to laws enforced by authority. Consequently, as a moral being, "he cannot be indifferent to the drift or tendency of the political laws to which he is subject." In fact, Morality and Law, Ethics and Politics, are interconnected. The moral notions of men affect their political ideals and laws; and these, in their turn, affect their morality. Political laws, it may be said, reflect and modify morality. Thus there is mutual influence between the two

sciences, though the influence flows more palpably from Ethics to Politics than from Politics to Ethics; for political legislation only *indirectly* influences the morality of a people.

§ 4. Relation of Ethics to Philosophy and Metaphysics. By Philosophy is meant 'the attempt at a universal explanation of things' (Weber). It is 'the effort to arrive at a clear and consistent conception of the plan and system of the world as a whole, and man's relation to it—his origin, function and destiny as a factor of it.' It thus involves metaphysics which means the study of the nature and relation of the realities underlying phenomena or experience—soul, matter and the Absolute Reality by which they are evolved and sustained (unless we take 'philosophy' in the empirical or positivistic sense as the study of the entire group of *phenomena* merely, excluding all questions about realities).

Ethics is closely related to Philosophy and Metaphysics. An adequate solution of moral problems depends ultimately on philosophical and metaphysical investigations. Thus, the ethical problems of the duty of man and his highest good cannot be finally settled apart from the metaphysical and philosophical problem of the essential nature of human personality and its place in the world-system. Ethics is constrained to ascertain the real constitution and ultimate significance of the universe, as affecting our destiny and determining our duties. In other words, an adequate ethical investigation presupposes an understanding of the world-system as a whole and man's relation to it—the relation of man to Nature and to the Absolute Reality or God. We see, then, that Ethics depends on Metaphysics and Philosophy.

It may be pointed out in this connection that all sciences lead ultimately to Metaphysics and Philosophy. Thus, Physics leads to an enquiry regarding the nature and origin

of matter; Biology, to an enquiry into the origin of life and the relation of life to matter and mind; Mathematics, to an enquiry into the real characters of space and time; Psychology, to an enquiry into the nature of the soul, of which the conscious states are the expressions, and the relation of the soul to the other two realities—matter and the Absolute Reality. In the words of Prof. Henry Stephen, "Sciences rest upon such metaphysical ideas as substance, causation, energy and force, matter and soul, space and time, and the like; so that it is impossible for one to think clearly in any of these sciences, without being constantly drawn back into the sphere of philosophy and metaphysics, and compelled to seek some 'working hypothesis' at least, as to the system and meaning of the world." (First Principles of Moral Science). But if all sciences are related to Metaphysics, the relation of the normative sciences to it is still more intimate. These sciences, dealing with ideals and principles which have authority over human life and which require us to think, act and feel in certain ways rather than in other ways, are bound to be necessarily reflective and metaphysical in character. How, for instance, can we determine whether our moral ideal is a creation of our own mind or is justified by the real order of things? How can we explain the authority of the moral principles? Evidently by metaphysical and philosophical speculation. Indeed, as Prof. Mitra remarks, "if the laws of Logic, Ethics and Æsthetics be not countenanced by the real constitution of the universe, then these sciences are to be regarded as altogether fictitious, if not mischievous." (Elements of Morals, p. 65).

When we look at the history of ethical thought, we find that the metaphysical views of philosophers regarding the world at large and man's relation to it have always affected their ethical views. Thus we find that the philosophical theories known as Materialism, Naturalism and Agnosticism have generally led to the ethical theory known as Hedonism.

Theistic Idealism, again, has led to Perfectionism. As D'Arcy says, "The opinion which we entertain as to man's life as a whole and its relation to the universe at large must influence our practice of the art of life (*i. e.*, our conduct) and consequently the view which we take of the science of conduct." (A Short Study of Ethics, p. 27). Here is a fact which distinguishes Ethics from the natural sciences. Though, as we have said above, all sciences are connected with Metaphysics, still the natural sciences are, in a sense, independent of it. Thus, Physics will remain materially unaffected whether a materialistic or an idealistic theory of the world is accepted; Biology will not be seriously influenced whether we believe 'biogenesis' or 'abiogenesis' to be the true theory of the origin of life; Mathematics will remain unaffected whether we believe that our knowledge of space is *a posteriori*, *i. e.*, given from without, or *a priori*, *i. e.*, supplied by mind from within. But, as Prof. Muirhead says, "no one could say that our ethical analysis of conscience will remain unaffected whether we believe with the Epicureans that the world is an accidental concourse of atoms or hold with the Stoics that it is the reflection of divine intelligence." (Elements of Ethics).

We conclude, then, that Ethics is very closely related to Metaphysics. In fact, "without philosophical and metaphysical investigations, Ethics is at most a poetry and a dream." A moral theory can satisfy the mind only when it is shown to be consistent with, or to follow from, a reasonable theory of the world and man's relation to it.

We may indicate here the more important metaphysical problems whose solutions affect Ethics :

(i) The problem of the essential nature of human self—whether it is an aggregate of conscious states produced by the working of the complex machine called the organism (like flashes of light elicited by the continuous friction of

solid bodies), or is a substantial reality with an end and function of its own, sharing in the nature of the Absolute Power that evolves and sustains the world. (ii) This, again, involves the question of freedom of will : are the rational activities or volitions of the self determined by itself according to its conception of its own highest good, or are they really determined from without by antecedent circumstances ? (iii) The question of future life or immortality of soul. (iv) The question of the existence and attributes of God—the question whether there is an Infinite and Absolute person who is the author and governor of the world and who holds moral relations with mankind. The solutions which we give of the above problems must affect human conduct and therefore the science of conduct.

Though Ethics is closely related to Philosophy and Metaphysics, yet they differ in several points. Thus they differ :—

(i) As to their *aims*. Philosophy and Metaphysics have a speculative or theoretical aim, while Ethics has both a theoretical and a practical aim.

(ii) As to their *scope*. Ethics deals with the highest *human* good, Philosophy (involving Metaphysics) deals with the cosmos as a whole and with the *cosmic* good towards which the processes of the cosmos are tending.

§ 5. **Ethics and Theology.** By Theology is meant the science or philosophy of religion. Hence, to understand the relation of Ethics to Theology, we have to discuss the relation of morality to religion. Religion may be defined as "man's belief in a being or beings mightier than himself and inaccessible to his senses, but not indifferent to his sentiments and actions, with the feelings and practices which flow from such belief" (Dr. Flint) ; and the highest form of religion is one which involves belief in one Infinite and Absolute personal God—almighty, all-wise and all-holy—who evolves and rules the world of things and minds,

What, then, is the relation of religion and morality? The following are the possible views :—

I. It may be supposed that religion is the source of morality. Thus, according to some thinkers (*e. g.*, Descartes, Locke and Paley), it is religion that makes morality —it is our knowledge of Divine nature and will and the feelings of fear and hope excited in our minds by such knowledge that lie at its basis. God has given us certain laws or rules of action and has enforced them by threats of punishments and promises of rewards ; and these laws are the moral laws. Acts are right or wrong simply because they are commanded or forbidden by Him. His arbitrary will communicated to man 'either by the light of nature or the voice of revelation' is the ultimate standard of right and wrong.

The consequence of such a theory is that, without a knowledge of the will and command of God, man would never come to think of moral distinctions. In other words, without a prior Theology, Ethics would be impossible. Thus Ethics rises out of, and is entirely dependent on, Theology.

But this theory may be objected to on the following grounds :—

(i) It deprives God of moral character and supposes that moral distinctions are dependent on His arbitrary will and are therefore reversible by Him. But the truth is that God is the perfect being, and righteousness is an element of His nature. What is right or good is in harmony with His nature ; what is wrong or bad is repugnant to it. Thus the distinction of right and wrong ultimately rests on Divine nature and is therefore necessary and immutable. He cannot turn the right into the wrong and the wrong into the right (as this theory supposes), for He cannot act against His own nature. His will is not arbitrary, but rational, and rises out of His perfect nature. Acts are not right or wrong

simply because God arbitrarily commands or forbids them; on the contrary, God commands or forbids them, *because* they are right or wrong.

(ii) According to this view, men obey the divine laws, simply because they believe that God is almighty and will reward or punish them (whether in this or in a future life) according as they obey or disobey the laws. But, as we have seen above when discussing the relation of Ethics to Politics, acts done from fear ot punishment or in the hope of reward can never have moral merit. Indeed, this theory substitutes self-interest for morality, prudence for virtue.

II. Some thinkers (*e. g.*, Kant and Martineau) suppose that morality is the source of religion.

(*a*) The view of Kant and the 'Rationalistic' theologians who followed him may be summarised thus :—Our conscience gives us the irresistible conviction that virtue will ultimately lead to happiness and vice to pain. But we find that the relation between virtue and happiness, and that between vice and pain, are *not analytical. Happiness is not contained in virtue and does not rise out of it as its natural and necessary consequent.* Experience seems to show that virtue does not of itself produce happiness and vice does not of itself produce pain. Hence we are compelled to think that the relation between virtue and happiness and that between vice and pain are *synthetical.* The belief is forced upon our minds that there must be some personal and moral power behind the world that will ultimately combine virtue and happiness, vice and pain.

Thus morality leads on to the belief in a Moral Providence or God who will ultimately reward the virtuous and punish the vicious; and this belief is the basis of religion.* (For further explanation, see Appendix B).

* "The highest good of man consists of two parts, the greatest possible

(*b*) The view of Martineau and his followers may be summarised thus :—

(i) Our conscience or moral faculty gives us an intuition of right and wrong and of the obligatoriness of right conduct. In other words, it enables us to perceive intuitively that such and such actions are right, and that, therefore, we are under an *obligation* to do them or that it is our *duty* to do them. But this consciousness or conviction of obligation or duty carries with it the idea and certainty of some personal being to whom obligation or duty is ultimately due, and to whom we are responsible for its fulfilment, and who will reward or punish us according as we perform our duty or not.

Now, this personal authority, to whom obligation is ultimately due, cannot be our fellowmen (government or society), because only an insignificant part of our moral life comes within the cognizance of our fellowmen. The greater part of it is unknown to them, or is such that they can neither reward nor punish us for it. In fact, in our hearts we are always appealing to a power higher than our fellowmen—we have the irresistible conviction that we are ultimately responsible to such a higher power alone.

Thus the conviction is forced upon our minds that the ultimate source of moral authority is an omniscient and omnipresent personal being to whom obligation is ultimately due

morality and happiness. The former only is within his power, and while, by persevering virtue, he makes this his personal character, he is often compelled to sacrifice happiness. But since the desire of happiness is neither irrational nor unnatural, he justly concludes either that there is a supreme being who will so guide the course of things as to render his holiness and happiness equal, or that the dictates of his conscience are unjust and irrational. But the latter supposition is morally impossible, and he is compelled, therefore, to receive the former as true." (Quoted by Dr. Flint in his *Theism.*)

and to whom we are responsible even for our most secret thoughts and actions—

"To whom ever lie bare
The abysmal deeps of personality."

We see, then, that our moral faculty, in giving us a consciousness of obligation and responsibility, necessarily presses upon us the idea of and belief in God.

(ii) Further, our conscience or moral faculty supplies us not merely with moral distinctions (*i.e.*, differences between right and wrong actions), but it also provides us with an ideal of perfect moral excellence—a standard of moral perfection—which is to be held before our mind's eye, and towards which we are to approximate more and more closely.

Now, this ideal of excellence is not an unrealised ideal—not an abstract conception merely; it must be one realised in a concrete person. If the ideal were regarded as no more than a mere abstract idea, it would have little or no effect on our character. "It would be to our minds only a vague idea instead of the spring of hopeful aspiration which it really is, if we did not think of it as already realised in a concrete person." Thus our conscience, in giving us the idea of a perfect being, gives us at the same time a belief in the concrete reality of such a being.

We see, then, that, according to Martineau, morality presses upon us the belief in God as the source of moral authority and as the ideally perfect being.

III. It may be supposed that historically religion precedes morality in order of development and that neither rises out of the other, but that each springs from a distinct source in the human mind. Religion arises out of a 'feeling of dependence' on a power or powers higher than man for self-preservation and well-being; and in its primitive form it appears to have no connection with morality, but means only a belief in the existence and power of a god or gods and an

aspiration and attempt to gain his or their favour and help in the struggle for existence. Morality, again, arises out of the idea of and aspiration towards perfection of self—which springs up in human mind at a higher stage of its development. But though religion and morality thus arise independently of each other in human mind, it is found that intellectual and moral developments lead to a final synthesis of the two, and religion comes to involve a conception of one God who is at once great and good, almighty and all holy.

• Which of the above views is the true one? The first of the above three views is untenable for reasons given above. We have to find out the elements of truth in the second and third views. Now, it cannot be denied that religious belief is universal and is found in some form or other even amongst the lowest and most primitive races of mankind who seem to have little or no moral conception; and that the lower or more primitive forms of religion seem to have no moral ideal and no connection with morality. Hence religion in the primitive form may be said to precede morality in order of development, and they have probably distinct sources in the mind. It must be admitted, however, that when morality co-exists with religion, it influences religion. The form of religious belief is normally determined by the degree of moral development. With the development of moral consciousness, religion becomes transformed, purified and ennobled. Indeed, religion in a higher form—one which satisfies the cravings of the human mind—is usually conditioned by morality. Such a religion involves the conception of one God who is at once the supremely powerful and the supremely good—who is not only the author and sustainer of the universe, but is also the righteous governor of all beings and the ideal personality. And this appears to be the true view of Martineau himself, for he writes in one place: "Ethics must be treated before Religion; not that they are an absolute condition of its beginning; not that

they always involve it as their end ; but that they implicitly contain the resources whence Religion, in the higher form which alone we can practically care to test, derives its availing characteristics, its difficulties and its glories." (Study of Religion, Vol. I, p. 19).

We conclude, then, that morality and religion are closely connected. Morality culminates in religion ; and religion finds its practical expression in morality. Moral consciousness, when fully developed, leads to the idea of and belief in God as the righteous governor of the world and the personal type of moral excellence, and to an aspiration to be at one with Him in nature and will—which constitute the essence of true religion ; and such a religion, present in a truly pious mind, is expressed in the conscientious discharge of the duties of life.

Thus morality and religion are related to each other ; and the corresponding sciences of Ethics and Theology are inter-related. Ethics, when attempting to explain the grounds of moral consciousness, rises into Theology ; and Theology, in giving us the grounds of our belief in the existence and attributes of God, falls back on Ethics. "An examination of the theoretical grounds of Morals brings us to Theology ; while an enquiry into the conditions of theological belief leads us to Ethics."

NOTES.

Note 1. Ethics and Psychology.

We have said before, when explaining the close connection between Ethics and Psychology, that ethical investigation involves a careful psychological examination of the facts of consciousness. But this does not imply that the psychological method alone is adequate for the solution of ethical problems. Ethical investigation presupposes a combination of the psychological and metaphysical methods (*Vide* Ch. III).

Note 2. Ethics and Sociology.

Ethics is viewed as but a branch or section of Sociology by a school of philosophers known as Evolutionists (*e.g.*, H. Spencer and Leslie Stephen). They try to explain the present mental and moral constitution of man by tracing it to ancestral experience. Moral ideas and principles are regarded as the products of social and biological evolution, and Ethics, as a branch of Sociology and ultimately of Biology. But these philosophers overlook the peculiar scope of Ethics. They forget that "whatever may be the origin of moral ideas, Ethics is not directly an enquiry into their *origin*, but into their *authority*." * (*Vide* Ch. II, § 2 & § 3).

Note 3. Ethics and Politics.

The relation of Ethics to Politics has been understood in different ways by different thinkers. (*a*) The view of Macchiavelli and his followers. We have said above that Politics should be subject to Ethics. But Macchiavelli and his followers are of opinion that Politics has no connection whatsoever with Ethics. A sovereign is not bound to obey moral principles. Falsehood, fraud, treachery are all justifiable from the political point of view, if they are necessary for the maintenance of the state; for the political maxim always is: "the end justifies the means."

But this is going too far. A state should be guided not merely by the principle of expediency, but also by the principle of justice. The strongest of all forces in the world is moral force. A state that wants to live and thrive must act according to moral principles, in all its dealings both with its own people as well as

*Prof. M. Sen, Elements of Moral Philosophy.

with other states. The Biblical truth "Righteousness exalteth a nation" should never be forgotten.

(*b*) Others, again, go to the opposite extreme and tend to identify the two sciences. Thus :—

(i) The utilitarian school, and especially one branch of that school, *viz.*, the egoistic, regards political authority as the source of moral authority, and Ethics as but a branch of Politics. "Morality is made to consist in the conformity of individuals to political laws for the good of society indeed, but from fear of punishment to themselves, so that their real motive is their own interest." (See Ch. X, Criticism of the Legal Standard). We may name Hobbes and Bain as two typical thinkers who try to deduce Ethics from Politics.

(ii) Others, again, look upon Politics as but a branch of Ethics (*e.g.*, Plato and Aristotle in ancient times and Spinoza and Hegel in modern times). Aristotle, for instance, regards "Politics not as a science separate from Ethics, but as the completion and almost verification of it in a true philosophy of humanity" (Wallace's Aristotle, p. 111). It should be remembered, however, that these philosophers, in identifying Ethics and Politics, overlook the distinctive characteristics of the two sciences.

Note 4. Ethics and Metaphysics.

Is Metaphysics possible ? We have assumed above the possibility of Metaphysics, and maintained that Ethics is closely related to Metaphysics, as any attempt to explain adequately the facts of moral life leads ultimately to metaphysical investigation. There are, however, certain thinkers known as Sceptics, Positivists, Agnostics, who deny the possibility of metaphysical knowledge in the sense of Ontology (knowledge of realities) and maintain that positive knowledge is possible only within the sphere of phenomena or experience, and consequently all attempts to understand the nature of soul, matter and God should be abandoned. Consistently with this agnostic position, thinkers like H. Spencer and Leslie Stephen declare that Ethics has no connection whatever with Metaphysics. It is not possible to give a complete criticism of Agnosticism as a theory of knowledge in

an elementary ethical treatise like the present one. We may, however, make the following remarks on the Agnostic view:

The philosophers of the Positivistic or Agnostic School draw a sharp line of distinction between phenomena or appearances and noumena or realities, assuming that the former only can be known, but not the latter. But a little reflection shows that phenomena are meaningless apart from noumena or realities. Phenomena and that which underlies and makes the phenomena are only two aspects of the same thing. The reality is *in the manifestation or appearance*, not outside of it, and in knowing the one, we know the other. As Dr. Martineau says, "Noumena and phenomena are inseparable companions on the field of intelligence, and must live or die together like the two cotyledons of one seed." (Study of Religion, Vol I, p. 121).

Some Agnostics admit the existence of the realities, but say that they are unknown and unknowable. But are they consistent here? Do they not assume some knowledge of the realities which they declare to be unknowable? Is Kant, for instance, consistent when he says that the noumenal world or the world of realities is the cause of the phenomenal impressions furnished to the mind? Spencer, again, says that we know that the Absolute power *is*, but we do not know *what* it is. But is it not impossible to know that an object *is*, and yet to know nothing that it *has*? Does not absolute Agosticism break down here? To interpose a barrier between thought and reality is to make all knowledge impossible, even the knowledge that there *is* a reality.

In fact, it may be said that, constituted as it is, human mind must think metaphysically. It is impossible to avoid Metaphysics altogether. "The rejection of metaphysical enquiry seems to be always accompanied by some misunderstanding of its meaning and method. It is, after all, only the effort to *think correctly* about matters regarding which no one can help thinking in some way or other. And the metaphysical question of the *meaning* and *truth* of experience is so involved in experience itself and in the nature of reason, that the attempt to exclude it always defeats itself; so that the metaphysical craving, though excluded for a time, always forces itself back more imperiously than before."

CHAPTER III.

METHODS OF ETHICS.

§ 1. By the expression 'method of Ethics' we mean the regular means employed or way followed by Ethics as the science of morality for the solution of moral problems. We should first consider the methods actually employed by the leading schools of ethical thinkers and then try to indicate the true method of ethical investigation.

(*a*) Many ethical thinkers have employed what is called the *psychological* or *analytical* method. It consists in psychological analysis of the facts of personal consciousness for the solution of moral problems.

(i) Thus, one school of ethical philosophers, known as Hedonists or Utilitarians, maintains that, through the psychological or analytical method, it is found out that pleasure is the ultimate object of desire – the natural end and motive of human action and thus 'the highest good of which human nature is susceptible.' This being the case, our actions are *right*, the Hedonists say, in proportion as they tend to promote pleasure, and *wrong* in proportion as they tend to produce the reverse of pleasure. Thus we see that, according to the hedonistic writers, the fundamental moral problem is solved through the psychological analysis of human nature.*

(ii) The intuitionists also apply the above-mentioned psychological or analytical method, though the results arrived at by them are different from those arrived at by the Hedonistic School. They maintain that the consciousness which we experience in connection with voluntary actions, when carefully analysed, is found to contain 'a self-evident intuition of rightness and wrongness as attributes inherent in the *form* and *nature* of actions.'

*See pp. 5 and 6 for the fundamental problem of Ethics.

The above schools apply the psychological or analytical method of ethical investigation. The critical method of Kant is essentially psychological.

(*b*) Many ethical thinkers, both ancient and modern, have employed what is called the *unpsychological* or *deductive* method to explain moral facts.

(i) Thus the materialistic and naturalistic thinkers assume as a principle established by science that human mind is a product of natural forces and is entirely phenomenal without any real or noumenal basis; whence they deduce the Hedonistic conclusion that the highest good of man consists in preserving himself as long as possible and enjoying the greatest amount of pleasure. This is an application of the naturalistic deductive method.

The *physical and biological* method of H. Spencer is essentially naturalistic and deductive. By him the moral laws are deduced from sociological and ultimately from biological and physical laws.

(ii) Some follow what may be called the metaphysical deductive mothod.

The *Geometrical method* of Spinoza and the *a priori method* of Leibnitz are essentially unpsychological or deductive and metaphysical in character.

The ethical method followed by idealistic thinkers of the school of Hegel and Green is also deductive and metaphysical. They begin by establishing a certain metaphysical theory of the essence of the world and of human mind, and having established this metaphysical theory, they proceed to deduce from it the standard and laws of conduct. Thus they metaphysically establish the theory that there is one Absolute mental power evolving the system of inter-related beings called the universe and realising itself as a self conscious spirit through it, and that man is not a passive product of Nature, but is rather a finite reproduction or reduplication

of the Absolute Mind or God that produces and sustains Nature. Thus man is *above Nature* in a sense—he shares in the nature of the Divine Being and is the finite agent working out divine idea and purpose. From this they deduce a *perfectionist* system of morals. Consistently with this theory, the highest good of man consists in *perfection of nature or self-realisation*—which implies the realisation of the Divine nature that is implicit in human nature—'the realisation of God in man.'

From what has been said above it is clear that, broadly speaking, there are two methods of ethical investigation—(i) Psychological, analytical or inductive and (ii) unpsychological or deductive. The latter, again, may be either physical or metaphysical, either naturalistic or rationalistic. The psychological method has been followed by Hedonists like Bentham, James Mill, J. S. Mill, Bain and others, and also by Intuitionists, *e.g.*, Cudworth, Clarke, Price, Martineau, Hutcheson, Shaftesbury. The method of the Critical or Kantian school is also essentially psychological. The physical or naturalistic deductive method has been followed by Epicurus, Lucretius, Helvetius, and in recent times by H. Spencer and his followers. The metaphysical deductive method was followed in ancient times by Plato and Aristotle, and in modern times it has been adopted by Spinoza, Leibnitz, Hegel, Green and their followers.

What, then, is the true method of ethical enquiry ? To understand this we must consider again the nature or character of Ethics as a science. We know that Ethics does not belong to the class of positive or descriptive sciences ; it is a *normative science* which seeks to define the moral ideal or standard—'the key to our moral life.' Hence ethical enquiry should not be conducted 'strictly along the lines of positive sciences, examining and describing the facts of experience and tracing their natural history' ; it should rather be

conducted 'by speculative reflection about the character of the ideal involved in morality.' In this sense it may be said that the true ethical method is *not positive*, but *teleological.* The physical and biological method of H. Spencer as well as the genetic and historical method of Leslie Stephen, being essentially *positive* in character, cannot be accepted as the true method of ethical investigation.

Thus it may be said that the true method is *not biological*; for the scope of Ethics is not an enquiry into the *origin* of human conduct, but into its *value*; and it is *not historical,* for Ethics aims, not at determining the positive laws of human progress, but at interpreting that progress as *moral* or in relation to the moral ideal; and we may add that the true method is neither wholly psychological nor wholly metaphysical or philosophical.

For a satisfactory solution of moral problems, the psychological method should be supplemented by the metaphysical or philosophical, the inductive by the deductive. The psychological method taken by itself is *inadequate*; "Psychological analysis is liable to error and may assume as given by intuitive perception and therefore as objective truth what is merely filled in by imagination under the influence of feeling."* The metaphysical method of explaining moral facts in the light of presuppositions about the constitution of the universe, is open to the charge of being *dogmatic.* Ethical investigation requires a judicious combination of the psychological and metaphysical methods. The results obtained by psychological analysis should be confirmed by metaphysical and philosophical investigation —they should be shown to be consistent with, or to follow from, a reasonable philosophical theory of the world and man's relation to it. It is possible for us, for instance, to discover by psychological enquiry the moral ideal as it

* Prof. H. Stephen, First Principles of Moral Science.

operates in our mind with the connected feelings and tendencies; but it is ultimately Philosophy or Metaphysics that can tell us "whether the ideal is a creation of our own mind or is justified by the real order of things." In fact, it is not too much to say that "without philosophical and metaphysical investigations, Ethics is at most a poetry and a dream."

It should also be stated in this connection that, in ethical investigation, we should apply both the subjective or introspective as well as the objective methods of mental study. In other words, we should study not merely what goes on in our own minds, but also the conduct and judgments of others.

We conclude, then, that ethical enquiry is both psychological and metaphysical, introspective and reflective, observational and speculative.

§ 2. Classification of ethical methods.

Attempts have been made by several distinguished writers to classify the ethical methods. Their classifications may be briefly indicated in tabular forms:

I. Stewart's Classification.

Methods.

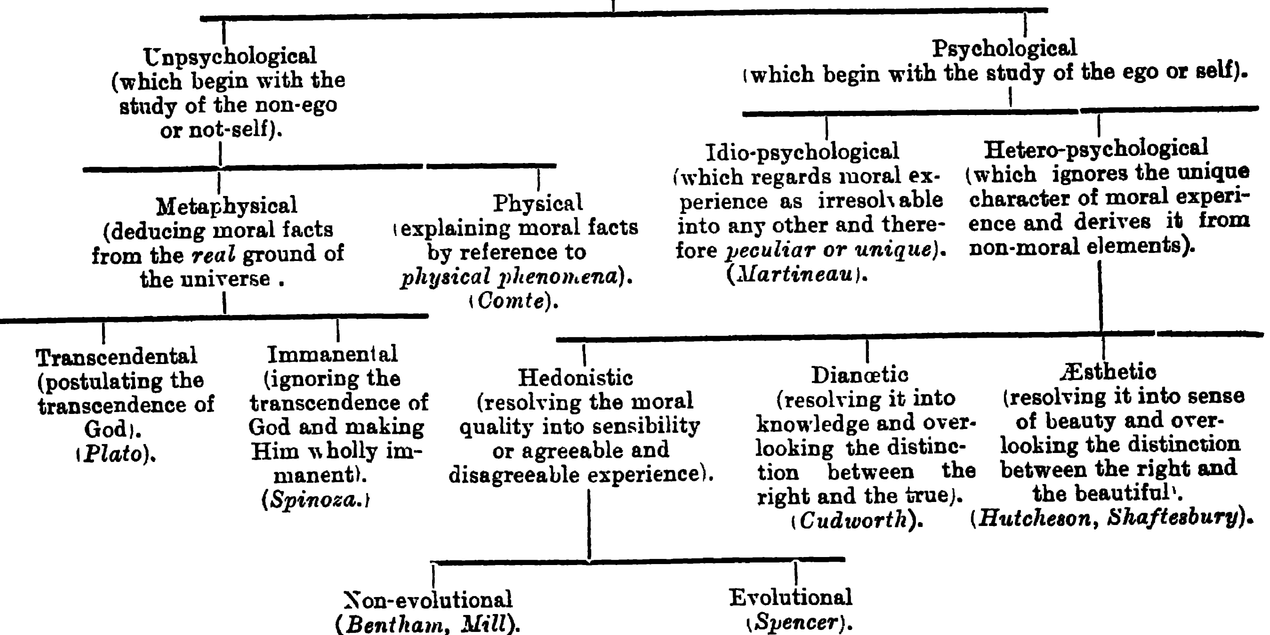
1. Positive method.
   - (a) Descriptive.
   - (b) Genetic.
2. Method of imaginative representation.

The descriptive method spoken of in Stewart's classification corresponds to the psychological method, and the genetic method, to the biological-and-historical method. The method of imaginative representation corresponds to the teleological and philosophical method.

Martineau's classification of methods is subjoined. He calls the true ethical method *Idio-psychological* (*Idios*, one's own, peculiar).

His classification of methods is also considered to be a classification of theories.

II. Dr. Martineau's Classification.



Critical Remarks on Martineau's Classification.

(*a*) Martineau's classification is usually looked upon as a classification both of methods and theories. But it should be borne in mind that method and theory do not mean the same thing. Method is the process; theory is the result. Method is the means; theory, the end. Method is the way, theory is the destination. It will perhaps be said by the followers of Martineau that the above classification may be regarded as a classification both of methods and theories, because ethical theories differ through the adoption of different methods of ethical investigation. Now, it is no doubt true that in many cases different methods lead to different theories. Still this cannot be regarded as universally true. As we have already seen, the same theory may be arrived at by different methods, *e. g.*, Hedonism may be arrived at by the psychological or inductive as well as by the unpsychological or deductive (physical or naturalistic) method. Again, different theories may be arrived at by essentially the same method—*e. g.*, Hedonism and Intuitionism are both arrived at through the psychological method. In fact, "Martineau's classification is a mixed one, involving two principles, one of method and the other of theory."

(*b*) Martineau draws a sharp line of demarcation between psychological and unhsychological systems. But it should be borne in mind that the psychological method has been largely, though subordinately, used in systems that are designated by Martineau as unpsychological. Indeed, "the actual types of ethical theory are not so sharply distinguishable as Martineau holds them to be."

III. *Dr. Sidgwick's Classification.*

Methods.

1. The method of writers regarding Ethics as the investigation of the true moral laws.

2. The methods of writers regarding Ethics as an investigation of the supreme good of man and the means of attaining it.

   (*a*) The method of writers regarding perfection of nature as the supreme good of man (*i.e.*, the method of the Perfectionists).

   (*b*) The method of writers regarding happiness as the highest good of man (*i.e.*, the method of the Hedonists).

      (i) The method of those who regard the agent's own happiness as the highest good (*i.e.*, the method of the Egoistic Hedonists).

      (ii) The method of writers regarding the greatest happiness of the greatest number as the highest good (*i.e.*, that of the Altruistic Hedonists).

The error of Dr. Sidgwick lies in his supposition that there are as many ethical methods as there are ethical theories. As we have said above, the method may be substantially the same, though the theories arrived at through the method may be different. Difference in *theory* does not necessarily imply difference in *method*.

CHAPTER IV.

Moral and Non-moral Actions.

§ **1.** Ethics, as the science of morality, has to give at the outset an expository analysis of *moral* actions as distinguished from *non-moral* acts.

Now, by moral actions we mean here those actions in which moral quality (rightness or wrongness) is seated, and which are, therefore, within the moral sphere and are thus objects of moral judgment—as distinguished from non-moral actions which mean those actions that are devoid of moral quality and thus excluded from the scope of moral judgment. It should be noticed in this connection that the word 'moral' is used in two senses—in a wider sense and also in a narrower sense :

(*a*) In the wider sense, the word 'moral' means that in which moral quality (rightness or wrongness, goodness or badness) is present, *i. e.*, what is either right or wrong, good or bad. In this sense 'moral' is opposed to 'non-moral' (*i. e.*, what is devoid of moral quality and cannot be characterised as right or wrong).

(*b*) In the narrower sense, it means what is right or morally good and is thus opposed to 'immoral', *i. e.*, what is wrong or morally bad. Thus there is a sense in which what is 'immoral' may be called 'moral', for it expresses a moral quality and thus comes within the moral sphere.

It is needless to add here that in this chapter the word 'moral' has been taken in the wider sense. In fact, this is the sense in which the word is generally used in the science of Ethics, though sometimes we find the word used in both the senses given above.

What, then, are the actions that are moral in the wider

sense? And what, again, are the actions that are classed as non-moral? It may be said that *voluntary* or *intentional* actions are moral in the wider sense. By a voluntary or intentional action we mean an action that is performed, not by blind impulse, but knowingly and intelligently, with pre vision, desire and free choice of means and end.

It follows from the above that the following classes of actions which are all non-voluntary are *non-moral, i. e*, outside the moral sphere and are not objects of moral judgment:—

(i) Actions of inanimate things.

(ii) Spontaneous or random actions—*i. e.*, actions that are the results of spontaneous outflow of energy from nerve centres.

(iii) Reflex action—*i. e.*, automatic response to sensory stimulation from without.

(iv) Instinctive actions, *i. e.*, marvellous adjustments of movements to *unforeseen* or *unanticipated* and yet *definite* ends. "An instinctive act may be defined as one to which an individual feels himself impelled without knowing the end to be accomplished, yet with ability to select the proper means for its attainment." (Prof. Dewey). "An instinctive action consists in the performance of a connected series of means co-ordinated and adapted to a distant end which lies outside the individual's present field of consciousness and often outside the range of its own life." (Prof. H. Stephen). Instinctive tendencies are found most explicitly in lower animals and are expressed in the activities displayed by them in seeking food, in self-defence and attack of enemies, in the construction of dwellings and in providing for the young. Though instinctive tendencies are not wanting in man, yet in him they are concealed or transformed by reason to a considerable extent.

(v) Imitative movements seen in children and many animals.*

All the above classes of actions are non-voluntary and therefore *non-moral*, *i.e.*, devoid of moral quality and excluded from the scope of moral judgment.

Again, since the essential condition which makes actions right or wrong is that they should be performed with *desire* and be the results of *reflection* and *choice*, it follows that what are called *accidental* acts are also *non-moral*. Such actions are the results, not of *desire*, but of *accident*, and therefore are not objects of moral judgment, *i.e.*, they cannot be characterised as right or wrong. If, for instance, a person *accidentally* breaks a gold watch belonging to another, his action cannot be regarded as wrong and blameworthy.† It is also clear from the above that actions of simple children and insane persons who are incapable of reflection and rational self-determination are excluded from the scope of moral judgment.‡

* Spontaneous, reflex, imitative and instinctive actions may be called *primarily automatic*. The peculiarity of these actions is that, though they are psychically originated, *i.e.*, arise out of conscious feeling, they are not guided by conscious thought (idea, desire, intention). For a full account of these, the student should consult some text book of Psychology. He should also see Appendix B of this book.

† Of course, in such a case, one may be blamed for *carelessness*, for carelessness is a disposition which a man forms in himself by his own previous conduct. Nevertheless, it is a well-known fact that even the most careful persons may commit accidental acts like the one here referred to.

‡ It is interesting to note in this connection that the Criminal Law of civilised countries does not hold such persons guilty of crimes. Cf. the Indian Penal Code, Sections 82-84—"Nothing is an offence which is done by a child under seven years of age". "Nothing is an offence which is done by a child above seven years of age and under twelve, who has not attained sufficient maturity of understanding to judge of the nature and consequences of his conduct on that occasion." "Nothing is an offence which is done by a person who, at the time of doing it, by reason

If, for instance, a simple child having no idea of property and knowing not the distinction between 'mine' and 'thine', takes some sweetmeats from a shop and puts them into his mouth, or burns something rare and valuable to enjoy the fun of seeing it burnt, his conduct cannot be blamed morally. Again, we do not blame an insane person who tries to set a house on fire, though we may regard him as a source of danger to society and keep him in confinement. We never condemn the conduct of Mary Lamb who, in a fit of insanity, killed her mother, though our indignation knows no bounds when we find a similar act done by a sane person.

We come, then, to a very definite conclusion regarding moral actions—those actions that are performed knowingly and intelligently by self-conscious and self-determining beings with desire, pre-vision and free choice of means and ends (after due deliberation) are *moral*, that is to say, objects of moral judgment. It should, however, be borne in mind that *habitual* actions, though non-voluntary and automatic, are objects of moral judgment, (i) because habits arise out of the repetition of voluntary actions or actions involving distinct anticipation of ends to be realised* and (ii) because a habitual action is begun with a volitional impulse.† (*Vide* Ch. VI, § 2).

of unsoundness of mind, is incapable of knowing the nature of the act or that he is doing what is either wrong or contrary to law."

* Hence habitual actions are called *secondarily automatic*, as distinguished from primarily automatic actions, *e.g.*, spontaneous, &c.

† As Prof. Sully remarks, "What differentiates such habitual chains from primarily automatic successions is the initial volitional impulse. I must consciously and voluntarily *start* the walking, dressing and so forth. But the start is all, so far as volition is concerned. The succession then takes care of itself, and, what is more, is carried out better for the non-intervention of attention." (Outlines of Psychology, p. 405).

§ 2. **Analysis of voluntary action.**

(Explanation of the terms spring of action, end, desire, motive, intention, volition.)

It is necessary now to give a detailed analysis of voluntary or purposive action which, as we have seen above, is the object of moral judgment. Though this comes within the province of Psychology proper, Ethics, as the science of conduct, must begin by exhibiting the elements involved in conduct or voluntary action.

Now, every complete voluntary action begins with certain states and processes within the mind; then it passes from the mind to the body (so to speak) and manifests itself in certain bodily movements; and finally it completes itself in certain external results, effects or consequences (commonly outside the body). In other words, it passes through three stages or phases—(1) a mental stage or 'stage of mental inception and preparation'; (2) an organic or bodily stage—'stage of organic work and muscular movement'; (3) an extra-organic stage or a 'stage of completion or realisation in the form of results'. To understand fully the nature of voluntary action, we must analyse each of these successive stages. Hence—

I. Mental Stage.

(*a*) *The spring of action.*—Every psychical action springs out of some want, need or imperfection which makes itself *felt* in a feeling of uneasiness, pain or discomfort. In the case of voluntary action, this want or need is not necessarily *present* or *actual*; it may be, and indeed often is, only *ideal* or *anticipated*—it may be some future want or need which the rational self holds before itself in idea, and the idea of which gives rise to the feeling of *uneasiness*. Nor is it necessarily the self's own want; it may be some present or future want of some fellow-being—which the self makes its own by love or sympathy.

It is clear from the above that the springs of voluntary actions are disagreeable feelings which may be either (i) "present sense-feelings of pain and discomfort or (ii) emotions and sentiments occasioned by the thought of future pains, wants, defects and dangers of *self* or (iii) those occasioned by the thought of present or future wants and sufferings of *other persons*, made ours by sympathy." "In animals, all actions doubtless spring out of actual present feelings of uneasiness, as hunger and thirst. But rational beings 'look before and after' and represent in idea future needs and pains of self and both present and future ones of others. Hence their springs are more frequently *ideal* pains than actually present ones."

(*b*) *The end and motive.*

The feeling of want, need or imperfection soon leads the rational self to think out or infer from past experience something or some appropriate object that is necessary to relieve the want or remove the imperfection, and the means of attaining that thing or object.*

Now, this object itself, or rather the change of circumstances necessary to remove the want, is said to be the *end* of the action ; and the *idea* or *thought* of the object, change or end which excites the state of desire for that object or end and thereby prompts the self to act for the attainment of it, is often called the *motive* (lit., a moving force—that which moves or induces one to act. See pp. 50-52).

(*c*) *Desire.* The disagreeable feeling of want and the thought of the object needed to remove the feeling of want together give rise to the mental state called *desire* which may be defined as "a peculiar state of craving, longing or yearning

* It is assumed here that the feeling of want comes first and suggests the idea of what will remove the want. But it often happens that the idea of some absent thing or state whose attainment will give satisfaction comes first and gives rise to the feeling of want.

for the attainment of the object or end." (The word 'motive' is also sometimes used in the sense of 'desire').

(*d*) *Conflict of motives or desires—deliberation, reflection or judgment.*

As there are always many wants demanding satisfaction, there are always many ends, motives or objects of desire simultaneously present before the mind. All ends or objects of desire cannot be attained at one and the same time; if one is to be attained, the others have to be postponed or set aside for the time being. Besides, ends or desires may be quite inconsistent with one another, so that the realisation or satisfaction of one makes impossible that of another. It may so happen that, of two alternative desires or ends, if one is to be realised, the other must be rejected or excluded altogether. There arises therefore in the mind a competition, rivalry or conflict(so to speak)between the different motives or desires.* The self has before it different ends, motives or objects of desire and different possible means of attaining or realising them. In other words, there are several possible lines or courses of action open to the self; and it has to ask itself: which of the alternative lines or courses of action should be followed? Which of the ends or desires should be realised? And by what means?

It is easy to see that moral judgment enters into this

* The expression "conflict of motives or desires" applies literally to the view of the Associationist or Sensationist school. From the Idealistic standpoint, it can be accepted only as a convenient metaphor, but not as literally true. What is really present in mind is a state of self's deliberation. As Prof. Dewey says, "It is a strife or conflict which goes in the man himself; *it is the conflict of himself with himself*; it is not a conflict of himself with something external to him, nor of one impulse with another, he meanwhile remaining a passive spectator awaiting the conclusion of the struggle. What gives the conflict of desires its whole meaning is that it represents the man at strife with himself. He is the opposing contestants as well as the battle-field" (Psychology, pp.364-65).

stage of a voluntary action. The self is here in a state of *deliberation, reflection, judgment.* It considers all the means and consequences of the alternative actions and judges them to be *expedient* or *inexpedient, right* or *wrong,* according to the standards of *utility* and *moral rightness.*

The stage of deliberation is followed by the stage of

(*e*) *Choice, selection, decision, resolution, determination, intention, volition proper.**

After due deliberation, reflection or judgment, the self *selects* or *chooses* (so to speak) one course or line of action to the exclusion or rejection of others. The deliberating self 'identifies itself for the time being with what it believes to be the most desirable of the alternative ends, together with the means and consequences.'

This fact is otherwise expressed by saying that the self *decides* or *intends* to follow a definite course of action—to realise a definite end with the means and consequences. "In determining the end to be desired and realised, it *consents* at the same time to the *means* which may be necessary for the realisation of it, and to the foreseen *concomitants* and *consequences* of its realisation. These, along with the end itself, constitute the *intention*". (See p. 53 for a full account of the nature of intention).

II. ORGANIC OR BODILY STAGE.

Next, the action passes into the stage of organic work and muscular movements necessary for realising the intention.

Then, through the medium of organic movements, the action passes over into

III. THE FINAL STAGE OF COMPLETION.

The action completes itself in certain results, consequences or effects (generally extra-organic), including (1) the

* For the distinction between *decision* and *determination* or *resolution*, see Appendix B.

realised intention (if the action is successful), (2) many unintended and accidental concomitants and consequences.

The realised intention, again, includes (i) the realised end or object of desire which was aimed at from the beginning and for the sake of which the action was performed; (ii) the realised means which were adopted for the realisation of the end; (iii) certain realised consequences of the act which were foreseen by the agent as inseparable from the main end and therefore consented to.

It is clear from the above that voluntary, purposive or intentional action with which we have to do in Ethics is possible only for a rational agent, for such an agent alone can *understand* his own present and future wants or needs as well as those of others and can *desire* their removal and has the power of *determining* (after due *deliberation*) what objects of desire should be attained, and what means should be adopted for their attainment.

We may explain here more precisely the terms spring of action, end, desire, motive and intention, which have already been explained in a general way.

(i) *Springs of action.* These may be roughly defined as "feelings of want arising out of some need or imperfection of the organic or mental system." All psychical actions, whether voluntary or non-voluntary, have *springs*, but only voluntary actions can have *motives* and *desires*.(See Ch. VII).

(ii) *End.* By this we mean the object or change of circumstances aimed at or desired as being necessary to relieve the want or remove the imperfection.

In this connection we should explain the expression "hierarchy of ends." This implies 'gradation of ends' or subordination of lower ends to higher ones, and of these, again, to still higher ones, and so on. An end can generally be accomplished through certain *means*; but then these *means*, again, are perhaps *subordinate ends* requiring *lower means*.

Thus we may speak of a hierarchy of ends or a series of ends, lower and higher—ends are willed as means to higher ends, and these, again, to a still higher one, and so forth.

It is clear from the above that voluntary action is usually extremely complex—one action including others within it as its means and being perhaps included in a higher and more complex one as factor of a system.

(iii) *Desire.*

Desire may be roughly defined as the craving, longing or yearning for the attainment of an end or object which is present in idea and believed to be capable of removing a want. It follows from this that desire in the concrete is a compound state involving (1) intellectual, (2) affective and (3) active elements. (1) The intellectual elements are (*a*) a consciousness of want, defect or imperfection; (*b*) an idea or representation of an end or object that is expected to remove the want and is therefore aimed at; (*c*) a consciousness of the difference between the actual and the ideal states. (2) The affective element is the feeling of pain, uneasiness or discomfort due to want or imperfection, combined with the ideal feeling of future satisfaction and relief (which will arise from the attainment of the object). (3) The active element of desire may be described as an incipient tendency towards activity for the realisation of the end. As Prof. Sully remarks, "While desire thus stands in relation to each of the two other phases of mind, it is sufficiently marked off as an *active* phenomenon. It is in virtue of this characteristic that it constitutes the connecting link between knowing and feeling on one side and willing on the other. In desiring a thing, say, an approaching holiday, we are in a state of active tension, as if striving to aid the realisation of that which is only represented at the moment, and recognised as such. The innermost core of desire has been variously described as a movement of the mind (*e.g.* by Aristotle), and

more commonly as a striving towards the fruition or realisation of the object" (Outlines of Psychology, p. 389).

From the above it is clear that, though intellectual, emotional and active elements enter into desire, the last factor is the predominant one. It is essentially "a longing or striving towards action and therefore the incipient phase of activity."

It will appear from what has been said above that desire is a mixed state in respect of *quality* or *tone*, being an inter mixture of agreeable and disagreeable feelings. Still it must be admitted that desire is more painful than pleasurable; for, though it involves an agreeable element (the ideal feeling of future satisfaction and the feeling of hope), the agreeable element depends on imagination and is therefore 'unreal and superficial.' The disagreeable feeling of want is fundamental and is the spur to activity. "The motive force of desire consists in the impulse to escape from the disagreeable state by attaining the desired end." "It is the painful element which incites the active tendency to get the object on which desire fastens."

(v) *Motive.*

The word *motive* literally means a 'moving force'—that which moves or excites to action. The word has been used in different senses by different writers. (*a*) It is used by many writers in the sense of "*feeling* which incites or urges us to action." This is apparently the sense in which it has been used by Locke, Bentham, Mill and Bain. (*b*) Others, again, mean by the motive of an action "the *idea* of an end or object of desire." Thus Green defines motive as "an idea of an end, which a self-conscious subject presents to itself, and which it strives and tends to realise." (Prolegomena to Ethics, Fourth Edition, p. 104). Prof. Mackenzie also writes, "Moral activity or conduct is purposeful action; and action with a purpose is not simply moved by *feeling*; it is moved rather by thought of some end to be attained. This

leads us to the more correct sense in which the term 'motive' may be used...The motive, that which induces us to act, is the thought of a desirable end." (Manual of Ethics, pp. 63, 64). Again, he says, "The object definitely presented as an end in desire is what is most properly understood by a *motive.* Such motives may conflict; the ends involved may be incompatible with one another." (*Ibid.*, p. 99). Referring to the ambiguity of the word, Prof. Henry Stephen remarks, "The term *motive* is used with different meanings. (1) It is sometimes used for the ultimate springs of all actions alike, which have been defined as *feelings of want* rising out of some need or imperfection of the organic or mental system. (2) It is used more properly for the idea of what will supply a want, and the ideal feeling of the satisfaction which will result from attaining it—the *object* of desire represented in idea. (3) It is used also for the complex *state of desire* itself to which the above elements of want and idea give rise, and which virtually includes them (so that motive may be said to be a feeling of want *plus* the idea of what will satisfy it *plus* the state of yearning for the realisation of the idea)". (Analytical Psychology, pp. 537, 538). Prof. Muirhead, again, writes: "Is the idea of the object the real motive of the action? In a sense it is, but a question might still be asked, Is this idea of a desired object a motive *before* the will has chosen it, or only *after* the will has identified itself with the object and been 'moved' by it? By some 'motive' has been taken in the former sense, to mean the idea of any object presented to the mind as desirable. Popular language would seem to sanction this usage when it speaks of 'conflict of motives', as though several ideas were fighting for mastery. But seeing that the motive is that which moves and the will is not moved until it chooses, it seems more correct to define motive finally as the *idea of the object which, through congruity with the character of the self, moves the will.*" (Elements of

Ethics, pp. 57-58). We see, then, that Prof. Muirhead takes the word *motive* in the sense of a *selected* or *chosen* end or object of desire represented in idea. Prof. Dewey also means the same thing when he writes : "a desire when *chosen* becomes a *motive.*" (Psychology, p. 366).

What, then, is the correct sense in which the term *motive* should be used ? It may be said that the feeling of want, the idea of what will satisfy the want, and the desire or yearning for the realisation of the idea are so closely dependent on one another that they may be regarded as forming one complex mental state and described as the *motive* or that which *moves* and impels one to act. In this sense Prof. Stephen's view given above (that motive = feeling of want + the idea of the object + the yearning for its attainment) is psychologically the correct one. But since the idea or thought of the object or end is the most important or essential element, we may roughly describe the motive as 'the idea of a particular end or object of desire' or 'the thought of a desirable end' or 'the object of desire represented in idea.' If, again, the question arises : Should we use the word 'motive' in the sense of '*any* object presented to the mind as desirable,' or in the sense of 'a *chosen* object of desire or end with which the self identifies itself', our answer is that it is better to use the word in the latter sense (*vide* the reason given by Muirhead). A motive, therefore, means a *chosen* end—a *selected* object of desire which *moves*, impels or induces the agent to act. (See 'Intention' and 'motive', pp. 53-55.)*

* If we take the term 'motive' in this sense, the expression 'conflict of motives' becomes inappropriate. There may be a 'conflict of *desires*', but no 'conflict of *motives*'. There can be only *one motive* of an action, and it arises in the mind *after* the conflict is resolved and the choice is made. Thus it may be said that the expression 'conflict of motives' involves a self-contradiction. We may, however, following popular usage, speak of simultaneous presence and conflict of several motives (in the sense of several desires or ends represented in idea), as we have done in pages 45 and 46 of this book.

(x) *Intention : its relation to motive.*

We have already given the sense in which the word *intention* is used in Psychology and Ethics. Intention comprises—

(i) The main end, 'motive' or chosen object of desire for the sake of which an act is designed and performed.

(ii) The means which the self thinks to be indispensable for the realisation of the main end, and to which, therefore, it *consents* (though the means may not be desirable in themselves, *e. g.*, enormous expense, labour, sacrifice &c.):

(iii) Certain foreseen ulterior consequences which also may not be desirable in themselves, but to which the self consents for the sake of the main end, because they are inseparable from it.

Thus intention is wider than motive. The motive is the selected end or object of desire represented in idea. But we *intend*, not only to attain a definite end or object of desire, but also to adopt the necessary means and to undergo the foreseen consequences of attaining the end, whether the means and consequences are desirable in themselves or not. When an intentional act is performed in spite of the undesirable means and consequences, we must understand that "they are not sufficiently repellent to counteract the desirableness of the end itself, and hence the end is desired and sought in spite of them, and they are deliberately *intended* and encountered for the sake of the main end."

Thus intention presupposes conflict of desires as well as *consent* to a particular act, deliberation as well as choice or self-determination. It is thus indicative of *character*. As Janet observes, "To act intentionally, is to have proposed to one's self the accomplishment of that very act, to have chosen it, to have consented to it, and to have accepted it with all its consequences." (Theory of Morals, p. 276).

We see, then, that *motive* is a part of *intention*. "Intention comprises the whole of the contemplated results of an act—both that for the sake of which an act is done and those in spite of which the act is done." In other words, it includes the motive as well as the deterrent, the persuasives as well as the dissuasives—those considerations which urge *towards* an action, and those which urge *away* from that action.

The following example will illustrate the nature of a voluntary action :—

Suppose a person returns home, hungry and fatigued. He asks the members of his family to give him something to eat, as he is excessively hungry. Here we see that the hunger which makes itself felt in a feeling of uneasiness or pain is the *spring of action* which suggests to him the *idea* of food and excites in him a *desire* to partake of it and thereby satisfy his hunger (the *end* of the action). Just when he is about to partake of the food that has been placed before him, a beggar appears at his door and assures him, with tears in his eyes, that for a few days he touched no food at all. The sight of the beggar excites in him a *feeling of compassion* and a *desire* to relieve his distress. But other members of his family have already taken their meals, and there is in the house a quantity of food just sufficient to satisfy his own hunger. Thus there arises a *conflict of desires* in his mind. After *deliberation* he *decides* or *intends* to give away his own food to the beggar and thereby relieve his distress, and to undergo himself the painful feeling of privation which is an inseparable concomitant of realising his motive. Here his *motive* is to relieve the distress of the man ; but his *intention* comprises not only this, but also the means and consequence of realising it, *viz.*, giving away his own food to the beggar, and undergoing the feeling of privation himself.

We may illustrate the distinction between *motive* and

intention by two other examples. "The father who punishes his child is said to intend the child's good. The good of the child is the motive. But he also intends to cause the child pain; the pain, however, though it is a part of the intention, cannot in any sense be called the motive or reason why he punished him. Or take the case of the man who sells his coat to buy a loaf of bread. His motive is to buy the bread. It is also part of his intention to do so. It is part of his intention also to part with his coat, but this cannot in any intelligible sense be said to be the motive of his conduct" (Prof. Muirhead, Elements of Ethics, pp. 58-59).

§ 3. Moral evil and natural evil.

From what has been said above, it is easy to see the distinction between moral evil and natural evil. Moral evil is dependent upon human volition. It thus presupposes knowledge and freedom of will. It is a consequence of the power of self-determination with which finite minds are endowed. (To speak metaphysically) moral evil results from freedom of will and consists in the self-assertion and self-isolation of the individual from the universal—in the assertion by the individual of his own apparent interests in opposition to those of other individuals and to the plan and purpose of the world-system as a whole (Divine purpose). Thus the Biblical story that man 'lost paradise', because he 'ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge', involves an important element of truth. It implies that moral evil arose from man's discovery of his own 'power of self-control and self-assertion in opposition to the universal.'

But there is such a thing as natural evil, *i. e.*, evil that is independent of human volition and results from the uniform operation of natural laws. We find in Nature such phenomena as excessive heat and cold, famine, disease, sudden catastrophes &c. which bring misery to mankind.

Now, though we condemn moral wickedness or evil, we never pass moral judgment upon physical phenomena like earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, excessive rain, draught &c. which cause so much suffering to man. "Such phenomena have no doubt often been regarded as visitations on men for their moral experiences; but by themselves they are wholly characterless." The evil or injurious effects produced by natural agencies as well as those produced by the involuntary movements of men are alike excluded from the scope of moral judgment. Natural evil, therefore, is *non-moral.**

§ 4. **Sin and error.**

Sin means wilful neglect of duty—wilful violation of the laws of morality and religion. It consists in knowingly performing what is wrong or improper and omitting what is right or proper. In other words, a sin is a morally evil act. It is, therefore, an object of condemnation. Error lies in judgment or deliberation and decision. Thus, our judgments of right and wrong may be erroneous. There may be incorrect moral judgments resulting from incorrect applications of moral principles to the cases which we are to judge. Now, a judgment of this type 'indicates a blunder or *error*, but not a *sin*—unless we wilfully and dishonestly distort or pervert a moral judgment by making a wrong application of a moral principle.' A perverse moral judgment, as distinguished from a merely incorrect one, is an object of moral condemnation. It must be borne in mind that sincerity is the essence of moral life. If a man forms a wrong moral judgment to suit his inclination—if 'he is at heart

* It may be pointed out in this connection that moral evil is usually punished with natural evil. Nature punishes wrong-doing or transgression of moral laws by producing injurious consequences on the physical and mental constitutions of the agent, e. g., disease, madness, death. (*Vide* Martineau's Study of Religion, Vol. II, pp. 52-58).

disposed to follow his inclination, but, to avoid the pangs of his conscience or to delude others, is ready to gloss over the act with specious reasons, he commits the grossest wrong." (Prof. A. C. Mitra, Elements of Morals, p. 146).

Summary and concluding remarks.

It is clear from what has been said above that every normally-constituted person—every agent capable of reflection and self-determination—is held responsible for his conduct. The term 'conduct', as used in Ethics, implies the voluntary and habitual acts of human beings. Voluntary and habitual acts are called *moral acts* (in the wider sense), as they imply the agents' moral responsibility. They are objects of moral judgment and are characterised as morally good or bad. Spontaneous, reflex, instinctive, imitative* and accidental acts, the acts of simple children and insane persons are excluded from the category of moral judgment and are called *non-moral*. A voluntary action may be briefly defined as an action for the attainment of a foreseen and desired end. It is otherwise called a purposive, rational or intentional act. It involves rational foresight, deliberation or reflection, and choice, decision, determination or intention. A voluntary act is the proper object of moral judgment. A habitual act, though non-voluntary and automatic, is still morally judged, because a habit is acquired through repetition of voluntary activity. Each habit is the product of a number of rational selections.

We should distinguish in this connection between moral evil and natural evil and between sin and error. The term 'evil' (used as a noun) means 'anything which is bad, injurious, undesirable or obnoxious'. A moral evil signifies anything wrong or injurious which is due to the deliberate activity of a morally responsible agent—an agent endowed with the powers of reflection and free

* It should be borne in mind that imitation may be either voluntary or non-voluntary. Non-voluntary or automatic imitations are *non-moral*. Voluntary imitations are *moral*.

choice. Natural or physical evils are *non-moral*. The evils which are due to the blind operations of natural phenomena (*e.g.*, earthquakes, floods, epidemics) are never regarded as objects of moral condemnation.

A sin implies deliberate violation of a moral law—wilful neglect of duty—an intentional deviation from the path of rectitude. It thus signifies the deliberate choice of what is wrong and rejection of what is right. There are sins of 'omission' and 'commission'. The agent may *omit* what is right or *commit* what is wrong. An error implies an erroneous or incorrect moral judgment and the act based thereupon. Moral errors arise either (i) from incorrect applications of general principles to concrete cases or (ii) from incorrect estimation of the conditions or circumstances under which the acts are done. Now, a sin is ethically condemned, but not a real error, for, in the latter, there is *no deliberate choice of what is wrong*. An agent may commit an error, blunder or mistake in his moral judgment, and unconsciously deviate from the path of virtue. An error, therefore, is a matter of regret, and not an object of condemnation. But perverse or perverted moral judgments (as distinguished from merely incorrect ones) are regarded as sinful and blameworthy. Ethics strongly condemns the person who wilfully forms an erroneous moral judgment to suit his inclination—who deliberately and dishonestly distorts or perverts his judgment to whitewash his evil motive.

CHAPTER V.

MORAL CONSCIOUSNESS.

§ 1. Meaning of moral consciousness.

By the expression 'moral consciousness' we mean 'the consciousness of right and wrong' or 'the awareness of moral distinctions.' In other words, "moral consciousness is that special form of awareness which reveals the moral worth of acts and agents." As rational and moral beings, we pass judgments both upon our own acts and those of our fellow-beings and think of them as being either right or wrong—as either coming up to, or falling short of, the standard of moral excellence or goodness. This thought or consciousness of moral quality with the concomitants essential to it is what we call moral consciousness.

It is easy to see that moral consciousness is by no means simple. It is a "complete psychosis," and, as such, it involves intellectual or cognitive, emotional or affective, and volitional or active factors. It is really a group of connected mental states and processes—intellectual, emotional and volitional. In the words of an acute writer, "moral consciousness is a collective term for the conscious states and processes, simultaneous and successive, which pass through the mind when we think of a particular line of action as being either right or wrong, *e.g.*, when we say that it is right for us to keep our word and wrong to break it—that it is right to avoid inflicting useless pain on a fellow being—that it is wrong to appropriate our employer's money, but right to use the proceeds of our own labour."

Now, in Ethics, this complex tissue of moral consciousness requires careful analysis, inasmuch as such an analysis

reveals the facts of moral life which Ethics seeks to elucidate. In fact, it is in the process of analysing and explaining moral consciousness that Ethics has to confront several problems which it undertakes to solve. We have already seen in Chapter I, Sec. 3, what these problems are and how they naturally arise.

§ 2. Contents or elements of moral consciousness.

We proceed now to analyse moral consciousness with a view to exhibit its elements. As we have said above, moral consciousness is complex, involving intellectual or cognitive, emotional or affective, and volitional or active factors. Let us consider them separately.

I. *Cognitive* or *intellectual factor* which includes 'knowledge of moral distinctions and all that is implied in this'. In other words, it involves

(i) The fundamental moral judgment of *right* and *wrong*. Moral judgment is *discriminative*. The 'right' cannot be known apart from the 'wrong', or, to be more precise, "the 'right' and the 'wrong', as applied to opposed alternatives of conduct, are known together."

(ii) An idea or consciousness that the *object* of the moral judgment is a *voluntary* or *intentional* act (involving reflection and choice, inward decision or resolution) or a habitual act performed by a *self-conscious* and *self-determining person*. Moral judgment, like every other judgment, presupposes an *object*.

(iii) Consciousness of *Law* as *standard*. Moral judgment involves reference to a Law or Principle which is conceived as the standard of right and wrong. The notion of right involves in every case the notion of law.

(iv) A consciousness or theory of the Moral Ideal or the ultimate good. The consciousness of the Law involves a consciousness or theory of the Ideal or the ultimate end of our being. The Law itself may be looked upon as the ideal,

or it may be looked upon as the means for the attainment of *pleasure* or *perfection* conceived as the highest human good or the supreme end of life—the ultimate standard of moral judgment.

(v) A reference to a *faculty* or *power* of judging right and wrong. Moral judgment presupposes a moral faculty or 'conscience.'

(vi) The judgment of *'oughtness'*, *obligation* or *duty*. The judgment of right and wrong is accompanied by that of 'oughtness', obligation or duty. When we judge an act to be right, we judge at the same time that we *ought* to do it or that it is our *duty* to do it and avoid the opposite.

(vii) The recognition of *moral rights*. The idea of duties is accompanied by the correlative idea of moral rights (*e.g.*, duties of children imply rights of parents). The conviction that it is our duty to act so and so in relation to another is accompanied by a correlative conviction that that other person has a right to be so treated by us.

(viii) Consciousness or recognition of *merit* or *demerit* in the agent. When an agent has done what we judge to be right or wrong, we approve or disapprove of his conduct and say that he possesses merit or demerit.

(ix) Consciousness of *responsibility*. We say that a rational agent is *responsible* or accountable for his intentional and habitual acts.

(x) Consciousness of *virtue and vice*. We judge or characterise a man as *virtuous* or *vicious* according as he has a permanent tendency, disposition or inclination to do the right or the wrong.

II. *Emotional or affective factor.*

As we have said above, moral consciousness is not purely intellectual; it also involves a group of feelings. Whenever we pass moral judgments upon voluntary actions done by ourselves or others, we have the feelings of approbation and

disapprobation &c. These moral feelings always accompany moral judgments, so that their presence in the mind indicates that a moral judgment has been passed. It must be borne in mind, however, that the existence of these feelings is no test or criterion of the *validity* of the moral judgment. Moral judgments, whether correct or incorrect, are followed by moral sentiments or feelings, so that these feelings are of no value as the standard for deciding the moral character of actions.

III. *Active or conative factor.*

We next come to the volitional or active factor of moral consciousness. This includes (*a*) the impulses and (*b*) an act of choice from among them. It should be noticed in this connection that the judgment of *duty* or *obligation* gives rise to what may be called a 'moral impulse', *i.e.*, to an *active* impulse or desire (more or less strong) to do what is right and avoid what is wrong. As we have already found, when we judge that a certain course of action is right, we judge at the same time that we are under an obligation to do it or that it is our duty to do it; and this judgment or conviction surrounds itself with an emotion, tending to rise into an impulse or desire to choose that course of action and identify ourselves with it.

§ 3. Peculiar characteristics of moral consciousness.

We are now in a position to understand precisely the peculiar characteristics of moral consciousness. (i) It is *reflective*. We have seen that moral consciousness involves moral judgment. Now, we cannot judge the moral quality of an act without considering the motive and intention of the agent and comparing his act with a standard. (ii) It is *sentimental*. Moral consciousness involves a feeling of reverence for the moral ideal and the feeling of approbation or disapprobation towards the act, according as it is right or wrong. (iii) It is *essentially active*. We

know that moral consciousness involves active preference of one course of action to another. (iv) It is *authoritative*. As we have seen above, we cannot judge an act as *right* without judging at the same time that we are *bound* to do it or that we *ought* to do it. (v) It is *social*; for our actions, whether right or wrong, affect society.

§ 4. **Moral sentiment.**

We have seen before that moral consciousness involves intellectual or cognitive, emotional or affective, and volitional or active factors. In the present section, we proceed to consider fully the emotional or affective side of moral consciousness under the name of *moral sentiment.*

A. *Meaning of the expression.* By the expression 'moral sentiment' we mean the group of feelings that arise in our minds in connection with our judgment of what is morally good or bad in our conduct and character. It may be stated here that the word 'sentiment' has been loosely used for (i) emotion in general (*i.e.*, feeling arising from the operation of thought), especially for compassion, and (ii) for emotions arising in the mind from the contemplation of the three ideals of excellence, *viz.*, the ideal of knowledge, the ideal of beauty and the ideal of moral perfection or excellence. Hence, corresponding to the three ideals, there are three groups of sentiments—intellectual, æsthetic and moral. We are concerned here with moral sentiments or feelings for the ideally perfect—the feelings rising out of the judgment and contemplation of what is good as distinguished from what is bad; and these are (i) reverence for the ideal of moral excellence, and therefore for God whom we regard as the concrete personality in whom the ideal has been eternally realised, and for human beings in whom it has been approximately realised, together with an yearning for its gradual realisation in our own character and life; and (ii) the feeling of satisfaction, appro-

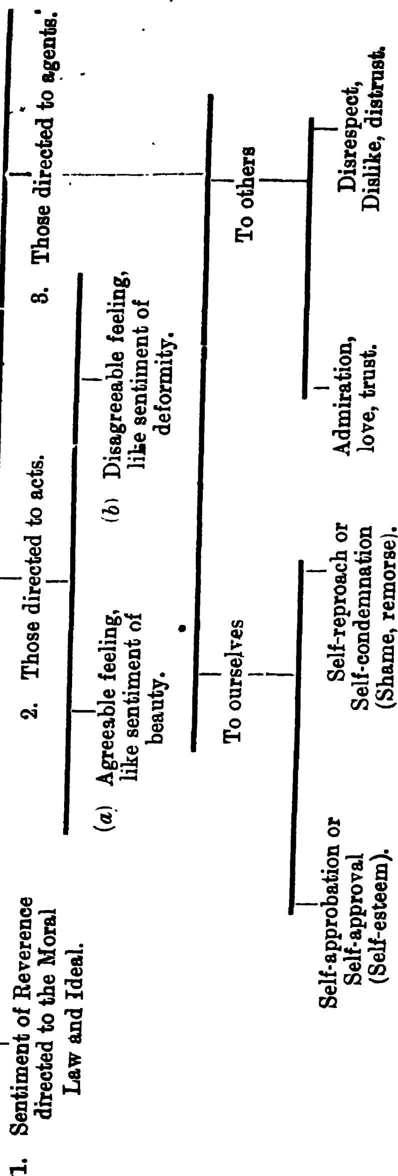
bation, approval which arises in our minds, when we judge an action to be right, and dissatisfaction, disapprobation or disgust when we judge an act to be wrong.

The feeling of disapprobation takes the form of the feeling of shame, guilt, remorse, repentance in the mind of the wrong-doer himself after the performance of the wrong action.

B. *Classification of the moral sentiments.*

An attempt has been made by some writers, *e.g.*, Calderwood, to classify the moral sentiments. In classifying the moral sentiments, Calderwood remarks, "The moral sentiments differ in their psychological character, according as the judgment on which they attend, applies merely to an *action* in itself considered, or to the *agent* whose action is observed, or to *self* as the agent. *** The natural ground of classification is obtained by reference to the distinct moral judgments which they accompany, as these judgments refer to the *actions* or to the *agent*,—and in the latter case, to *another person* or to *self*." (Hand-book of Moral Philosophy, pp. 203, 204).

Thus Calderwood broadly classifies the moral sentiments into (1) those towards acts and (2) those towards agents. The latter, again, have been subdivided into those towards (*a*) others, and those towards (*b*) self. His classification is a very good one, its only defect being that in it there is no explicit mention of the fundamental moral sentiment of *reverence* for the Moral Law and Ideal. Hence, by slightly modifying his classification, we get the one indicated in the tabular form given below :


Moral Sentiments.
1. Sentiment of Reverence directed to the Moral Law and Ideal.
2. Those directed to acts.
(a) Agreeable feeling, like sentiment of beauty.
(b) Disagreeable feeling, like sentiment of deformity.
3. Those directed to agents.
To ourselves
Self-approbation or Self-approval (Self-esteem).
Self-reproach or Self-condemnation (Shame, remorse).
To others
Admiration, love, trust.
Disrespect, Dislike, distrust.

The above is a complete classification of the moral sentiments; and this is based on that of Calderwood, as said above. We first take into our consideration the fundamental moral sentiment of Reverence. We then come to the moral sentiments rising in connection with our moral judgments. As we pass judgments upon *acts* as well as *agents*, we have to enumerate separately feelings directed to acts and those to agents. Now, a right action, like a beautiful object, inspires in us an agreeable feeling, while a wrong action, like an ugly or deformed one, gives rise to a disagreeable feeling. The moral sentiments towards agents are, again, subdivided into (1) those towards self and (2) those towards others. When a person makes his own voluntary acts the objects of moral judgment, he feels certain moral sentiments towards himself. He experiences the feeling of self-approbation or self approval, if he judges the act performed by him as right, and self-reproach or self condemnation when he believes his act to be wrong. In its intenser form the latter is designated shame and remorse. When the moral sentiments are directed towards others, we find that the sentiments assume the forms of admiration and disrespect, love and hate. If a person has done what is right, we admire and esteem him, and if he has done what we judge to be wrong, we regard him as an object of disrespect and aversion or hatred.

C. *Characteristics of moral sentiments.* When we examine carefully the nature of moral sentiments, we find that (1) they are essentially *disinterested*, in the sense that they do not involve reference to self-interest; (2) they are *practical*, because they are action-controlling feelings and are always directed to voluntary acts of rational agents and never to passive experiences or irrational things; (3) they are *regulative* or *imperative*, accompanied as they are by the sense of obligation or duty. They impel us more or less strongly to choose and adopt a course of action which is discerned as

right and obligatory. (4) They are *social*, inasmuch as moral goodness and badness manifest themselves in the reciprocal actions of the members of human society. Moral sentiments thus involve a social consciousness, a consciousness of the solidarity of the self and the community and tend to impel one who feels the sentiments to a life of active goodness towards others.

D. *Comparative importance of intellect and sentiment in moral judgment (Relation of moral sentiments to moral judgments).*

We know that moral consciousness involves intellectual as well as affective elements—moral judgment as well as moral sentiment. A question arises in this connection: What is the precise relation between moral sentiment and moral judgment? Which of them is more fundamental? Two views are possible :—

(*a*) The advocates of the 'Moral Sense theory' hold that moral sentiment is the ground of moral judgment. In other words, they maintain that moral sentiment precedes and determines moral judgment. We are so constituted that we are spontaneously pleased or displeased with an action, and our moral judgment is based on this affective experience or feeling. The contemplation of an action occasions in us an agreeable or disagreeable feeling, a feeling of approbation or liking or a feeling of disapprobation or disgust, and this feeling is the ground of subsequent moral judgment or estimate that the action is right or wrong. If an action excites in us a disagreeable feeling of dislike, disapprobation or disgust, the action is wrong; if it excites in us an agreeable feeling of liking, approbation, admiration, then it is right. Consistently with this theory, a right action is to be defined as one which excites in us an agreeable feeling of approbation, and a wrong action as one which excites in us a disagreeable feeling of dislike or disapprobation.

We see, then, that, according to this theory, moral judgment rests, not on reason, but on sentiment.

(*b*) The advocates of the 'Rational theory' go to the other extreme and hold that moral judgment or judgment of right and wrong comes first and the moral sentiments are based on such judgment. Thus the intellectual element of moral consciousness precedes and determines the affective element.

Thus, according to the former view, moral judgment rests on, and is the consequence of, moral sentiment; according to the latter, moral sentiment rests on, and is the consequence of, moral judgment. In other words, according to the former, an action is right or wrong, because it produces in the mind a feeling of satisfaction or dissatisfaction; according to the latter, an action produces in us the feeling of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, because it is intellectually apprehended or judged as right or wrong.

General objections to the Moral Sense theory:

(i) The most obvious objection to which this theory is open is that it makes moral judgment depend on feeling—which is the most variable and untrustworthy of all mental functions. We know that sensations and feelings are variable—they may be different in different persons (even in the same stage of intellectual progress), and consequently they cannot be made the objective standard of right and wrong.. In fact, the theory "makes moral conduct to be too much a matter of blind impulse and instinct, depending on a feeling springing up in our minds, we do not know how or why."

(ii) The theory fails to give an adequate explanation of obligation, duty or moral law. As Prof. H. Stephen says, "The mere fact that an action gives us such and such a feeling does not explain why we should be bound to do the action; nor why there should be a universal law that men should do such and such actions. Feeling by itself is blind so to speak, and does not bind one to anything."

(iii) Again, introspection reveals to us that we form a moral judgment by considering the intention of the agent and comparing his act with a standard, and then experience a feeling that is in harmony with the judgment. Thus personal consciousness corroborates the rational view.

(iv) A true system of Psychology tells us that reason has the supreme place in human constitution and that human life is normally guided by it. Consistently with this psychological view, the 'Rational theory' seems to be the true one.

E: *Function of moral sentiments.*

It has already been pointed out that moral sentiments do not constitute a sure criterion or standard of the *accuracy* of the moral judgments (*Vide* p. 62). As Dr. Calderwood remarks, "The law of the rise of moral sentiments, by which they depend upon preceding judgments, makes the moral sentiment of no value as a standard for deciding the moral character of actions. Everything here depends upon the validity of the moral judgment with which they have taken their rise. A sentiment of self-satisfaction will attend a judgment of self-approbation, whether that judgment be correct or not." (Hand-book of Moral Philosophy, pp. 206, 207).

We see, then, that from these moral feelings we cannot infer that the connected moral judgments are correct, though it may be said that in many cases they are so.

It must not be supposed from this that moral sentiments have no use at all. They are said to be the very 'voice of conscience.' By cheering us when we follow the path of duty and by tormenting us when we go astray, they lend a decided support to morality. They are the 'sanctions of morality' and act as stimulating as well as restraining forces. The agreeable moral sentiments impel us to do what is believed to be right, while the disagreeable feelings are deterrents, tending to restrain us from doing what is viewed as wrong.

Thus the importance of the moral sentiments consists in the fact that they tend to prevent wrong-doing and continuance in immorality and thereby to preserve the purity of our moral constitution. It must be borne in mind, however, that habit modifies the moral sentiments. Continuance in immoral conduct blunts our moral sentiments and gives rise to utter shamelessness. If a man goes against the voice of his conscience and continues to perform acts that he knows to be wrong, his moral sensibility is gradually weakened, and he ultimately comes down to the level of brutes. As Dr. Martineau remarks, "Whatever resistance a man may encounter at the outset from his compunctions will rapidly give way; each expostulation will be fainter than its predecessor, and the tendencies that quench it will establish a less disputed sway; till, at last, every murmur of remonstrance dies, and the autocracy of inclination is complete. What is the effect and amount of this change? Simply this: the characteristic *human* element is gone: *the man* has disappeared; and in his place there stands either *brute* or *devil.*" (Types of Ethical Theory, Vol. II, p. 68).

√ § 5. Notions of good and bad, right and wrong, moral law and the highest good.

In the previous chapters, and also in this chapter, when analysing moral consciousness, we had to use the terms 'good' and 'bad', 'right' and 'wrong', 'moral law' and 'the highest good'. In the present section we proceed to explain the terms in a general way.

(*a*) *Good and bad* (*or evil*). *The highest good.*

The terms 'good' and 'bad' (or 'evil') are sometimes used in Ethics to express moral quality. But as these terms are too wide, signifying anything that is desirable or undesirable, eligible or obnoxious, whether moral or non-moral, the terms 'right' and 'wrong' are generally preferred. We may,

however, use the expressions *morally* good and *morally* bad to signify moral quality.

It should be stated in this connection that the words 'good' and 'evil' are used as adjectives and also as nouns. Thus, when we speak of 'material and immaterial goods,' 'a relative good' and 'the absolute or the highest good' &c., we evidently use the word 'good' as a noun. 'Good' used in this way implies 'an object of desire or pursuit,' 'anything that is sought,' *e.g.*, wealth, health, courage, &c. 'Evil,' again, (used as a noun), means 'anything undesirable or obnoxious, anything which we like to shun or avoid,' *e. g.*, poverty, disease, cowardice, &c.

A distinction is drawn in Ethics between *good as an end* and *good as means.* If, for instance, happiness be good, then wealth and health as means of attaining happiness are also good; again, if health be a good, then regular physical exercise, regulation of diet, taking of good medicine are also good as means of securing health. It will be easy now to understand the distinction between *a relative good* and *the absolute or the highest good* of man. A 'relative good' is good as a means, *i. e.*, it is an object which is desired, not for itself, but for the sake of an ulterior end or good which, again, may be relative to a still higher end, and so on. By the 'absolute good of man,' again, we mean "the good which is desired for its own sake, and is not subordinate to any ulterior good". In short, it is not good as means to a higher good; it is the highest good—the ultimate end of human activity. Every voluntary action is relative to an end or object of desire; and among ends, there is a gradation, culminating in the supreme end or the highest good which is the goal of life. "There must be a final, absolute or ultimate end to which everything else which we desire is relative and subordinate; else we should go on *ad infinitum* and desire would be left void and objectless."

We conclude, therefore, that the ultimate, absolute or

highest good of man is *intrinsically* good, in the sense that it is desired for its own sake, and not for the sake of anything else. In other words, it is not a means to any higher end or good. "It is the ultimate end of human activity; the one end to which all human interests and human pursuits are subordinate—the perfect consummation of human aims"; and, as we shall see later on, it is at once a personal or private good and an impersonal or common good.*

The various theories of the highest good—*e.g.*, Hedonism, Rigorism and Eudæmonism will be fully discussed later on.†

(*b*) *Notions of right and wrong and Moral Law.*

As we have said above, 'right' and 'wrong' are the two terms best fitted to express moral quality. The central problem of Ethics is: What is the exact significance of the terms 'right' and 'wrong' as applied to conduct? Or, in what does the rightness or wrongness of an action consist? And the various ethical theories are attempts primarily to solve this problem. These theories are postponed for subsequent treatment. We may here simply indicate the meanings of the terms.

The word 'right' is derived from Latin *rectus*, meaning 'straight' or "according to rule." The word 'wrong,' again, is connected with the word 'wring' and means literally 'twisted.' Hence it has come to mean "not according to rule."

Hence by 'right conduct' is meant "conduct or action which is in accordance with a moral law or principle," and by 'wrong conduct' is meant "conduct or action that is in violation of a moral law."

* A distinction is sometimes drawn between *personal* good or "good that is desired by a person for himself" and *impersonal* good or "good that is desired by a person for the sake of another or the society or community at large."

† By *Hedonism* is meant the theory that the highest good of man consists in pleasure or gratification of sensibility. By *Rigorism* is meant

We see, then, that the notions of right and wrong involve the notion of law. For instance, a particular act of kindness is right, because, as a general principle, kindness is right. Hence a moral law may be called "a standard or test of right and wrong." It is a general principle for determining the rightness or wrongness of conduct. This notion of law is not always explicit. It is often *implicit*, and particular cases of conduct are often judged as right or wrong without any distinct apprehension of the general principles involved in the judgments.

It has been said above that 'right' means "according to rule or law." Rules or laws, however, have reference to some result, end or good to be achieved by them. Hence in most systems of moral philosophy moral laws are looked upon as the means for attaining the highest good or the supreme end of life; and 'right conduct' is ultimately defined as "conduct which leads to the attainment of the highest good" and 'wrong conduct' as "conduct that leads to the non-attainment of the highest good." In other words, an action is right or wrong according as it is conducive to, or subversive of, the highest good (pleasure or perfection)—the ultimate standard of moral judgment. This interpretation of the terms "right and wrong conduct" and "moral law" is consistent with the moral theories of Hedonism and Eudæmonism. It is not accepted by Rigorism which looks upon 'right conduct' or 'strict obedience to Moral Law for its own sake' as itself the highest good.

Thus, according to Hedonism and Eudæmonism, a moral law is "the statement of the *value* of an action which resides

the theory that the highest good consists in a purely rational activity and suppression of sensibility—in strict obedience to the Moral Law out of a pure disinterested regard for it. By *Eudæmonism* is meant the theory that the highest good consists in a synthesis of rationality and sensibility, perfection and satisfaction (*Vide* Ch. XI, XIV, XV).

in its helpfulness or capability to produce the highest good." In Rigorism, too, "a moral law is the statement of the *value* of an action, but the value is supposed to be inherent in the action itself apart from any of its consequences."*

NOTE.

Relation of moral sentiment and moral judgment.

We have said above in pp. 67-69, when dealing with the relation of moral judgment and moral sentiment, that the 'Rational theory' is more satisfactory than the 'Moral Sense or Sentimental theory.' We hold that moral judgment is more fundamental than moral sentiment. In other words, we maintain that moral judgment which is essentially intellectual is the origin, ground, basis or foundation of moral sentiment. But we must not too sharply divide our moral experience into two appreciable stages—first, moral judgment, and then, after an appreciable or long interval, moral sentiment. As soon as a moral judgment is passed, a group of moral sentiments in harmony with the judgment arises in the mind of the subject.

* It may be pointed out in this connection that moral laws are general *regulative* principles to which our actions *should* conform. In being regulative principles, moral laws differ from natural laws. A law of nature is simply a general statement about what *is*, *i.e.*, an *actual fact*. It implies the way in which things of a particular class must necessarily behave in virtue of something in their own essential nature, *e.g.*, the Law of Gravitation which simply states that bodies tend to move in certain ways relatively to one another. A moral law is a law which states that something *ought to be*. It may also be stated here that moral laws are either *ultimate* or *first* principles, or *secondary* laws derived from them. As an example of the former, we may take the Hegelian maxim "Be a person, and respect others as persons." See "Outlines of General Philosophy," Ch. XVIII, § 3 and § 5, footnote,

CHAPTER VI.

NATURE, METHOD AND OBJECT OF MORAL JUDGMENT.

§ 1. Nature and method of moral judgment.

A moral judgment means a judgment regarding the moral quality of an action—a judgment which sets forth whether an action is right or wrong. In other words, "moral judgment is the mental act of discerning and pronouncing a particular action to have the quality or predicate of rightness and obligatoriness or its opposite, of which a general idea or standard is already before the mind."

Now, it is evident that a moral judgment, like other judgments, presupposes (i) a *subject* that judges—*i.e.*, a rational mind capable of judging things according to standards, (ii) an *object* that is judged, (iii) a *standard* according to which the object is judged, and (iv) a *faculty* or power of judging. It must not be supposed that moral judgment is simply of the nature of what is called a judgment in Logic. As Prof. Mackenzie observes, "It is not merely a judgment *about*, but a judgment *upon*. It does not merely state the nature of some object, but compares it with a standard, and by means of the standard pronounces it to be good or evil, right or wrong. This is what is meant by saying that the moral point of view is normative." (Manual of Ethics, p. 127). Similarly, Prof. Muirhead remarks, "There is a distinction (to go no deeper) between a judgment *of* fact and a judgment *upon* fact, corresponding to the distinction between 'judgment' in its logical sense of 'proposition' and 'judgment' in its judicial sense of 'sentence'. It is with judgment in the latter sense that Ethics has to do. It deals with conduct as the subject of judicial judgment, not with

conduct merely as a physical fact." (Elements of Ethics, p. 17). Thus, moral judgment is *not* a mere statement of fact, but is a judgment of *value* or *worth*. It involves reference to the *ideal of goodness*. It is *critical, normative, regulative and practical*; it consists in judging what an action *should be*. It is a judgment which sets forth whether an act is conducive to the *ultimate end or good*. It further carries with it the conviction of the agent's *responsibility*.

The moral quality of an act, then, is recognised in this way: when we perceive that a voluntary act has been performed, we compare it with the moral standard that is already present in our minds, and thus judge whether that act is in conformity or out of conformity with it, *i.e.*, whether it is right or wrong. In other words, moral judgment involves the application of a standard to a particular moral act. It should be borne in mind that, in estimating the moral character of an action, we must take into account the whole intention of the agent, the entire attitude of the person at the time of the action. We must not judge the moral quality of an act, simply by the actual outward consequences or by the principal end or motive for the sake of which the act has been performed. (*Vide* object of moral judgment below).

From the foregoing remarks it is clear that moral judgment involves intellectual exercise, and not sensibility. In fact, moral judgment is *inferential*, involving the application of a standard to a particular case, though we must not suppose that our ordinary moral judgments involve *explicit* reasoning or inference. The element of inference in such cases is *implicit*. It is only in complex cases or in reflective examination that the whole process becomes explicit—the moral principles are explicitly held before the mind and reflected upon and applied to the cases under consideration. (*Vide* Ch. V, p. 71).

It is also clear from the above that moral judgment, like

every other judgment, is purely intellectual and is devoid of moral quality. It is, of course, logically correct or incorrect, but it is not characterised as morally right or wrong, good or bad. In other words, a moral judgment, as such, is not an object of moral judgment. It is not itself a moral act, or an act having moral quality. But perverse moral judgments, as distinguished from merely incorrect ones, are moral acts having the moral quality of wrongness; and they are accordingly objects of moral condemnation (*Vide* Chapter IV, § 4).

§ 2. Object of moral judgment.

We have seen before that the object of moral judgment is voluntary action or action for the realisation of a foreseen and desired end, and that, accordingly, non-voluntary actions are excluded from the scope of moral judgment. We have also seen that habitual actions, though non-voluntary, are still regarded as objects of moral judgment, just because they are the results of repeated voluntary actions, and because the initiative is always taken by a volitional impulse.*

But the above statement that the object of moral judgment is *voluntary action* raises an important question. We know that every complete voluntary action involves internal and external factors. It begins with or springs out of certain

* The following remark made by Prof. Muirhead on the subject of habitual actions deserves notice: "Though the habit may have become so strong as to have completely mastered the will and we can no longer be said to be responsible for its consequences, yet there was a time when each repetition of the action was voluntary; so that, while we cannot strictly be said to be responsible for the habitual act as an isolated event, seeing that it is not a voluntary one, we are responsible for it as an instance of a habit which has been voluntarily acquired, and which we ought to have checked before it became inveterate. In other words, what we really judge in such a case is the series of voluntary acts whereby the habit has become irresistible." (Elements of Ethics, p. 44). See also Aristotle's Ethics, Book III, Ch. VII.

states and processes within the mind and completes itself by producing certain external consequences or results.* Hence the question arises: "On which of the factors of an action does its moral quality depend? On its mental antecedents or its external results? Is it according to the former or the latter that we must judge the moral character of an action?"

(*a*) In the first place, a little reflection will convince us that we cannot judge the moral quality of an action by its actual outward results or consequences. It would be quite reasonable for us to do so, if we were sure that the actual results must exactly agree with and express the agent's desire and intention. But it is a matter of common observation that 'the actual results are often different from, and sometimes entirely contrary to, what was intended.' Thus it is sometimes found that the agent intends to produce a good result, but, through the interference of circumstances, a bad result is produced. If a skilful surgeon, to the best of his belief and judgment, performs an operation to cure a patient, and the patient dies from it, the actual result is bad; but still the action of the surgeon cannot be judged as wrong. Again, it is sometimes found that a person intends to produce a bad result, but a good result is produced by chance. "If I," said Dr. Johnson, "fling half-a-crown to a beggar with intention to break his head and he picks it up and buys victuals with it, the physical effect is good; but, with respect to me, the action is very wrong." In fact, if we look at actions solely from an external point of view, the distinctions between moral and non-moral acts will be obliterated; and in many cases wrong acts will be justified and right acts condemned.

(*b*) We conclude, therefore, that the moral value of an

* For a complete analysis of voluntary action, see Chapter IV, § 2, pp. 44-48. An action includes "the whole process from the first stir of origination in the mind to the last pulsation of visible effect in the world."

action does not depend on the external consequences. To judge aright the moral worth of an action, we must take into our consideration its mental antecedents—the mental states and processes out of which it springs. We must not forget that it is the purity of the source that determines the moral goodness of an act, else "the charity of one whose heart overflows with the milk of human kindness and the charity of an ambitious schemer will stand on the same footing." As Prof. Green insists, "It is not by the outward form that we know what moral action is. We know it, so to speak, on the inner side." If the inner side be cut off, the outer side loses all its moral significance.

But here a new difficulty presents itself to us : Are we to judge the moral quality of an act by its *motive alone* *i.e.*, the desired end for the sake of which the act was performed (as some have supposed) ? Now, though the motive whence the act springs must be taken into account in passing a moral judgment, we cannot judge according to this alone ; for the end or motive may in itself be innocent and even positively good, and yet the *means* may be quite wrong. In other words, a man may act out of a good motive, and yet the means adopted by him for realising the motive may be morally wicked. The motive of a thief and that of an honest trader are the same, *viz.*, the idea of pecuniary gain ; and this in itself is no doubt quite innocent. But to realise his motive, the thief adopts unfair means, *viz.*, stealing ; and hence his act is wrong.

It follows from this that, in judging the moral character of an action, we must take into account, not only the motive or the end aimed at (that which induced the agent to act), but also the means selected by the agent for realising it.

In fact, to judge an act simply by the nature of the motive or the end aimed at (without considering the nature of the means) is to assume the dangerous principle that "the

end justifies the means";* and it is obvious that even the most criminal or wicked actions may often be justified, if this principle be accepted. In the case of many wicked actions it may be shown that they were committed for the sake of innocent or even noble motives or ends. Surely such wrong acts cannot be excused, even though their ends or motives are good. A person may commit fraud to further the prospects of his friend, a robber may commit robbery to support his family or to relieve the distress of poor persons; but still the act of fraud or robbery cannot be justified. "We cannot (justifying the means by the end) defend the persecutor of heresy whose instruments were 'the thumb-screw and the stake' and whose motive 'the advancement of the glory of the Lord'."

The truth is that, when two acts are connected as means and end and form one complex act, "the inferior moral quality of the one spoils the superior moral quality of the other, much as a discordant note may mar the excellence of its companion."

(*c*) From what has been said above it is clear that, to judge rightly the moral quality of an act, we must take into account the whole *intention* of the agent; for intention comprises, as we have seen before,† the motive or the end for the sake of which the act is designed and performed, as well as the means and foreseen consequences of realising it. How, then, do we know the intention of the agent? Now, in the case of our own acts, there is no difficulty; we ourselves know in every case what our intention is, or has been; and we judge our own acts in every case by what we know to be or to have been our intention. But when we judge an act performed by another, we first *infer* from the facts and

* This means that a good end justifies evil means. (*Vide* Macchiavelli's view, Chapter II, Note 8. See also Note 2, pp. 85-87).

† *Vide* Chapter IV, § 2.

circumstances of the case what his intention was, and then we judge the act by what is known in this way about his intention. Thus the real seat of the moral quality is the whole complex intention or volition. In other words, the real object of moral judgment is the whole intention of the agent.

But we may go further. We have seen before that intention presupposes deliberation and choice or self-determination on the part of the agent and is thus indicative of his character. Hence we may also say that it is the *character* of the agent as expressed in the intention, or the *agent himself* that is the object of moral judgment. As Prof. Mackenzie says, "The moral judgment is not properly passed upon a *thing done, but upon a person doing.*"

It may be pointed out in this connection that the controversy as to whether the moral quality of an action depends upon the motive or the consequences has become historic, the Utilitarians maintaining that a judgment is passed upon an act for its consequences,* and the Intuitionists insisting that a judgment is passed upon an act for its inner spring or motive. It has already been shown that the moral value of an action depends upon the *intention* (which includes the motive). In other words, it depends, not upon *all* the consequences of the act, but *only* upon those consequences that were *anticipated* and *intended.* A man cannot be held responsible for the consequences which he did not foresee (except in so far as he is responsible for *not* foreseeing them).

Summary. From the foregoing remarks it is evident that—

(1) The object of moral judgment is voluntary action or action for the realisation of a foreseen and desired end ; non-voluntary actions are non-moral, *i.e.*, excluded from the scope of moral judgment.

(2) The moral quality of a voluntary act does not depend

* Cf. the popular maxim "All's well that ends well".

upon *the actual external consequences* or *results*, but upon the *intention*. It is not sufficient that good or bad results are actually produced by actions. It is necessary to enquire how far such results were *anticipated* and *intended*.

(3) Since intention indicates the character of the agent, it may be said that ultimately it is the *character* of the agent or the *agent* himself that is the object of moral judgment.

§ 3. The question of the object of moral judgment involves another question : *Whom* do we judge first ? Ourselves or others ?* Does moral judgment originate in self-reflection or external observation of others ? Do we judge our own actions primarily or the actions of others ? Whose actions are the direct objects of moral judgment ? Our own or those of others ? According to most English moralists, we begin with estimating others and then transfer the habit to ourselves. In other words, we primarily and directly judge the actions of others and then turn round, so to speak, to judge our own actions ; and when we judge ourselves, we really place ourselves in the position of others, and imagine how others would judge us. We judge ourselves from the standpoint of an "impartial spectator" (as Adam Smith would put it). The theory that our moral judgment begins with the estimation of others has been held by philosophers of different schools, and their views have been summarised by Dr. Martineau in the following words :—"When we have seen in a neighbour how a certain action sits upon the human character, we discover (says Adam Smith) whether it will be becoming in ourselves. * * Bentham and James Mill rest the same general answer on a different ground. We first apply moral terms, they tell us, to those acts of others which directly benefit us ; next, to those which, though benefiting a stranger, we like to encourage for the chance of their being sometimes

* This question has been fully discussed by Dr. Martineau in his Types of Ethical Theory, Vol. II, pp. 27-38.

repeated upon us; and, last of all, when these habits have furnished us with general rules of praise and blame, to acts of our own, falling under the analogies we have established. ......With Mr. Herbert Spencer, the 'moral consciousness' is wholly a social product, due to the observed or experienced consequences of executed action; and pre-eminently, among those consequences, to the *penalties*, of public opinion, and of law.........The moral consciousness is the self-application of a lesson learned *ab extra* (*i. e.*, from external observation). We also find Mr. Leslie Stephen saying, 'Moral sense is a product of social factor. Conscience is the utterance of the public spirit of the race, ordering us to obey the primary conditions of its welfare'." (Types of Ethical Theory, Vol. II, pp. 27-28).*

Criticism. But the above view is open to a grave objection. We have seen before that the real seat of moral quality is the *internal aspect* of voluntary action. We have found that, in judging a voluntary action, we must take into our consideration the *desire, motive, intention*, whence the action springs; and these are subjective facts which can be known, in the first instance, *not through external observation*, but *through internal perception, introspection or self-consciousness*. In other words, we can be directly conscious of these facts in the case of our own actions, and only indirectly and inferentially in the case of the actions of others. Hence our own actions are the primary and direct objects of moral judgment. As Dr. Martineau observes, "Of other men's actions the visible part,* which follows on the mental antecedents, is the first element that comes before our view; all that precedes is beyond the reach of eye and ear, and is read off only by inference from the external sign. That sign would be unmeaning to us, were not the thing signified already familiar to us by our own inner experience. * * Without

* That is to say, movements and consequences.

susceptibility to love, how stupidly should we stare at the kiss of the mother to the child! Without openness to sorrow, at the prostrate and sobbing mourner! Without sense of religion, at the clasped hands of prayer! * * Criticism then, like charity, 'begins at home' and finds, in our own consciousness, the prototypes of all the sentiments and springs of action which it redetects and appreciates abroad." (*Ibid.*, pp. 29-30).*

From the foregoing remarks it is clear that moral judgment is directly and primarily self-judgment or self-criticism. In other words, our moral estimates originate in self-reflection. We pass judgments primarily and directly on our own actions and indirectly on those of others; since we can interpret the actions of others by what we have experienced in ourselves. As Prof. H. Stephen says, "Direct moral judgment is possible only in the case of our own actions —it must be an act of our own *self*-consciousness. It follows that, in judging the actions of others, we must conceive them as our own and think how we should judge ourselves under the same circumstances."†

* Dr. Martineau cautions us against a possible misapprehension. He says that we must not too sharply divide our experience into two appreciable stages—first, self-judgment, and then, after an interval, judgment on others. To quote his own words: "In saying that our moral estimates originate in self-reflection, I do not mean to maintain that a solitary human being could have them; or that there are two appreciable stages in our actual experience, first of self-judgment, and then, after an interval, of judgment directed upon others. Doubtless, the presence of others is indispensable to the development of this part of our nature: not less than external physical objects are requisite to the unfolding of our perceptive power. But in neither case does this circumstance entitle the objective factor to any priority, of time, or of causality. ...This view does not in the least contradict, but only more accurately define and interpret, our main position, that the moral consciousness is at its origin engaged in *self-estimation*, and does not circuitously reach this end through a prior critique upon our fellow-men. The self-consciousness is elicited by the image we see of ourselves on the theatre of life; but thus awakened carries with it, of its own inherent essence, the self-judgment in which moral sentiment consists; and the judgment passes on to others, simply as implicated in the same nature with ourselves." (Types of Ethical Theory, Vol. II, pp. 30-38).

† First Principles of Moral Science, pp. 81, 82.

NOTES.

Note 1. The question may be asked : Is an intention itself the object of moral judgment, or is it necessary for the intention to be embodied in an overt act before moral judgment can properly be passed on it ? To this it may be replied that we do pass judgments on intentions and even on desires. Such a judgment finds its full expression in the Sermon on the Mount where "the eye of lust and the heart of hate are called to account with the adulterer and the murderer." (*Vide* Matthew's Gospel, V. 21, 22, 27, 28). In fact, regarding intention, it may be said that "an intention itself is an action on the part of the rational self—it is the result of choice ; it is a determination, a fully-formed purpose, a determined effort to produce a result" ; and, as such, it has a moral value of its own. It must be remembered, however, that a man who acts upon a good intention formed by himself is better than one who simply forms a good intention or a pious resolution not embodied in an overt act ; for the former, by his act, brings about, or at least tries his best to bring about, some consequences beneficial to society.

Note 2. The question may be asked : Does the end ever justify the means ? We have said above that, as a rule, the end does not justify the means. In other words, wrong actions cannot be excused even if the ends aimed at are good. There are exceptional cases, however, in which the goodness of the end seems to justify the evil means or at least serves as an extenuating circumstance. Are we not justified, it may be asked, in inflicting bodily injuries on a robber, to save the life and property of an innocent person ? Does not the end justify the means here ? Take again another case. The motive of a guardian in punishing his ward and curtailing his liberty is the ward's improvement. Here the motive is good, but the means, *viz.*, infliction of pain, is in itself bad. Does not the end justify the means here ? Again, we find in every civilised state that judges and magistrates as representatives of the Government are constantly imposing punishments on guilty persons for the prevention of crime. Here also a good end justifies evil means.

But the above cases do not warrant us in holding that the end justifies the means and that, therefore, in judging the moral character of an action, we may safely ignore the means and take into account only the motive or the end aimed at. We must always hold as a rule that the end does not justify the means.

In fact, it may be shown that such cases are only apparent. When we closely examine the cases in which the ends appear to justify the means, we find in every such case some special reason why the evil character of the means is not looked upon as imparting a bad character to the whole act. In some cases "it can be pleaded either that the means used, though evil in themselves, are for the greater good of those that suffer by them, or that they are submitted to voluntarily for the good of others (as in cases of self-sacrifice)".* Take the case of an affectionate father who punishes his son in order that the son may shake off evil habits. Here the motive of the father, *viz.*, the improvement of the character of his son, is good, and the means, *viz.*, infliction of pain connected with the punishment, is bad ; but the act of the father is justified, because the means used, though evil, is for the greater good of the son himself who suffers by the means, and not for the good of any other person. Again, in such a case, it can be shown that the motive of the agent is positively good or exceptionally noble, and that the means used, though evil in itself, is the best or the most appropriate under the circumstances, and that no better means can be thought of or are available, and that, therefore, the agent uses the evil means, much against his own will, for the realisation of the good end. The truth is that it is the character of the agent that is ultimately the object of moral judgment, and conduct or voluntary action is good or bad only in relation to character. Hence we cannot estimate the moral quality of an action unless we take into account the character of the agent as it is manifested in and affected by his whole act. But this implies that we must take into account the whole intention of the agent—his deliberate choice of means and end.

* Prof. H. Stephen, First Principles of Moral Science,

The principle that "the end justifies the means" must be regarded as dangerous from the ethical point of view, because the acceptance of it may lead to the formation of criminal dispositions. We know that, according to the principle of transference of interest, the means gradually become as interesting or desirable as the end itself, and come to be sought for their own sake, independently of the original end. Hence, if men be allowed to perform wrong actions for the realisation of good ends, they may gradually come to perform wrong actions independently of the original ends and thus acquire criminal dispositions. As Burke says, "Criminal means, once tolerated, are soon preferred, as presenting a shorter cut to the object than through the highway of moral virtues."

We conclude, then, that wrong acts cannot be permitted, defended or justified even if the ends or objects aimed at are good. Ethics as the science of morality condemns the adoption of evil means.*

* The question is sometimes asked: was St. Crispin right in stealing leather to make shoes for the poor? For the story of St. Crispin and the discussion of this question, see Appendix A, p. xii.

It may be pointed out in this connection that the means may sometimes be good and the end may be bad, *e.g.*, a person may save the life of another to use him as an instrument of immorality. It is easy to see that the conduct of the agent in such a case is sinful and blameworthy. An act is morally bad if either the means or the end be bad.

CHAPTER VII.

SPRINGS OF ACTION.

§ 1. We have seen in Chapter IV, Sec. 2, that all psychical actions have *springs*, *causes*, *origins* or *sources* within the mind ; which, as we know, are *disagreeable feelings of want rising into impulses or tendencies to act.* In the present chapter we proceed to classify the springs of human action. A classification of the springs of action is necessary in an ethical treatise, because it leads to a clearer understanding of the various wants and desires of human nature.

How, then, are we to classify the impulses or springs of action ? A little reflection will convince us that a classification of the springs of actions or impulses practically means a classification of the wants of human nature, which range from the wants of the organic life expressing themselves in appetites up to the more purely mental wants expressed in the intellectual, æsthetic and moral sentiments. It is also easy to see that a classification of wants is substantially a classification of the *feelings*. For every feeling is capable of giving rise to a want and desire in some way or other.*

It should be stated here that the springs of action have been classified psychologically and ethically by Dr. James Martineau, one of the most eminent of recent Intuitionist

* "All feelings are capable of becoming springs of action, because they are all capable of becoming pleasurable or painful, and therefore of giving rise to wants, and to actions for overcoming them. When a feeling is disagreeable, it expresses a want or defect, and whatever will remove it is felt as a *need* and thereby becomes an object of *desire*. When it is agreeable, it expresses the acquisition of some good, and the absence of it is felt as a *want*, and whatever will renew it becomes an object of desire and motive of action." (Prof. H. Stephen).

writers. He has drawn out an elaborate table of the springs and has arranged them in order of merit and has given us in this connection his view of the mode of moral judgment. We shall examine here the psychological classification and ethical gradation of the springs of action as given by him and also his account of moral judgment. The psychological classification of the springs of action is based on their points of similarity and dissimilarity as mental phenomena. The ethical classification of them is based on their relative moral values.

§ 2. Psychological classification of the springs of action or impulses.

Martineau brings all springs of action or impulses under two classes—*Primary* and *Secondary*. By the former he means "those impulses which urge a man, in the way of unreflecting instinct, to appropriate objects or natural expressions"; by the latter he means "those which supervene upon self knowledge and experience and in which the preconception is present of an end gratifying to some recognised feeling." (Types of Ethical Theory, II, p. 135). In other words, the primary springs of action are the natural impulses or tendencies of human nature, the secondary springs of action are those inclinations or tendencies which are acquired through experience and habit. The former are consciously directed towards appropriate objects, the latter towards the pleasures experienced by the agent as arising from the gratification of the former. Thus the secondary impulses are transformations of the primary, each primary impulse being transformed by the supervening love of pleasure into a corresponding secondary impulse.

Thus, one may be prompted by natural hunger to seek food (which is necessary for the well-being of the system), or he may be led to seek a certain variety of food after tasting it and deriving an agreeable experience therefrom.

I. The primary springs of action. These are classified into four groups :—

1. *Propensions*, making us strive towards those things which are necessary for maintaining or continuing physical life. As Dr. Martineau says, "They are the forces of first necessity for the mere physical life in its individual maintenance or successive continuance, and exhibit the lowest terms on which it could hold its footing in the world at all." (*Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 140). These include

(*a*) *Appetites* (*Hunger, thirst, sexual appetite*) having reference respectively to food, drink and sex ; (*b*) *animal spontaneity* or the *impulse towards physical activity*, alternating with *repose*.

2. *Passions*. These are *repulsions*, thrusting away what is hurtful or inharmonious or else withdrawing us thence, and include—

(*a*) *Antipathy*, or dislike for an evil which is present.

(*b*) *Anger*, or aversion towards what has just hurt us.

(*c*) *Fear*, or aversion towards a future evil.

Referring to the primary passions, Dr. Martineau remarks, "They are evidently provisions for entrenching our nature in security amid threatening or invading ills, and removing to a distance whatever jars with its appointed life. ....Towards an object of natural aversion immediately before us, we feel *Antipathy* ; towards that which has just hurt us, we experience *Anger* ; towards that which menaces us with evil, we look with *Fear*." (*Ibid.*, p. 141).

3. *Affections*—attractions towards other persons or animals reminding us of our kind. These are

(*a*) *Parental*, 'directed towards the child in whom the parental being is continued and the parental image renewed'.

(*b*) *Social*, 'directed towards our equals, who are not, however, our absolute equals or mere self-repetitions.'

(*c*) *Compassionate*, 'directed towards those that are in want'.

4. *Sentiments*—directed towards "ideal relations, objects of apprehension or thought that are above us, yet potentially ours." Thus they appear as aspirations towards "what is higher than ourselves." They include—

(*a*) *Wonder* or intellectual sentiment, leading us to inquire into the nature and causes of events.

(*b*) *Admiration* for beauty. This is the æsthetic sentiment which underlies the artistic endeavour to produce beautiful things and the natural desire to surround one's self with what is beautiful in nature and art.

(*c*) *Reverence* or the moral sentiment directed towards the Moral Ideal and what is good and perfect in the character of rational beings. This underlies our moral endeavour to be what we *should* be.

II. The secondary springs of action include—

1. Secondary propensions, such as

(*a*) Gluttony and love of luxury (*e.g.*, rich foods and drinks).

(*b*) Love of sensual delights (voluptuousness).

(*c*) Love of physical exercise (*e.g.*, riding, walking &c).

(*d*) Love of ease.

(*e*) Love of power.

(*f*) Love of money or gain.*

2. Secondary passions or acquired repulsions, *e g.*,

(*a*) *Malice, censoriousness,* ill-will, or the fondness for finding fault with others.

(*b*) *Vindictiveness,* or the cherishing of anger.

(*c*) *Suspiciousness* or *mistrust,* suspecting evil from others and cherishing of fear.

3. Secondary affections (sentimentality) including—

(*a*) *Love* or *fondness* for self-regarding play with children.

* Money and power are at first sought as means to pleasure and luxury, but afterwards for their own sake, in accordance with the principle of Transference of Interest. (See Ch. XI, § 3, foot-note).

(*b*) *Love* or *fondness* for the delights of social intercourse.

(*c*) *Taste* for exciting and indulging pity.

Referring to the secondary affections, Dr. Martineau writes, "If, instead of family affection, freely spent on the members of a home, there is a self-regarding play with them as instruments of sympathetic interest ; if, instead of social affection, flowing out upon companions and equals, there is the mere love of society as a means of tasting the fruits of such affection ; if, instead of Compassion, there grows up a taste for exciting and indulging Pity ; this change is accurately described by saying that it is a transition from natural health to sentimental disease." (*Ibid*, p. 177).

4. Secondary sentiments, *e.g.*,

(*a*) *Love of self-culture—i.e.*, love or fondness for the delights of intellectual exercise.

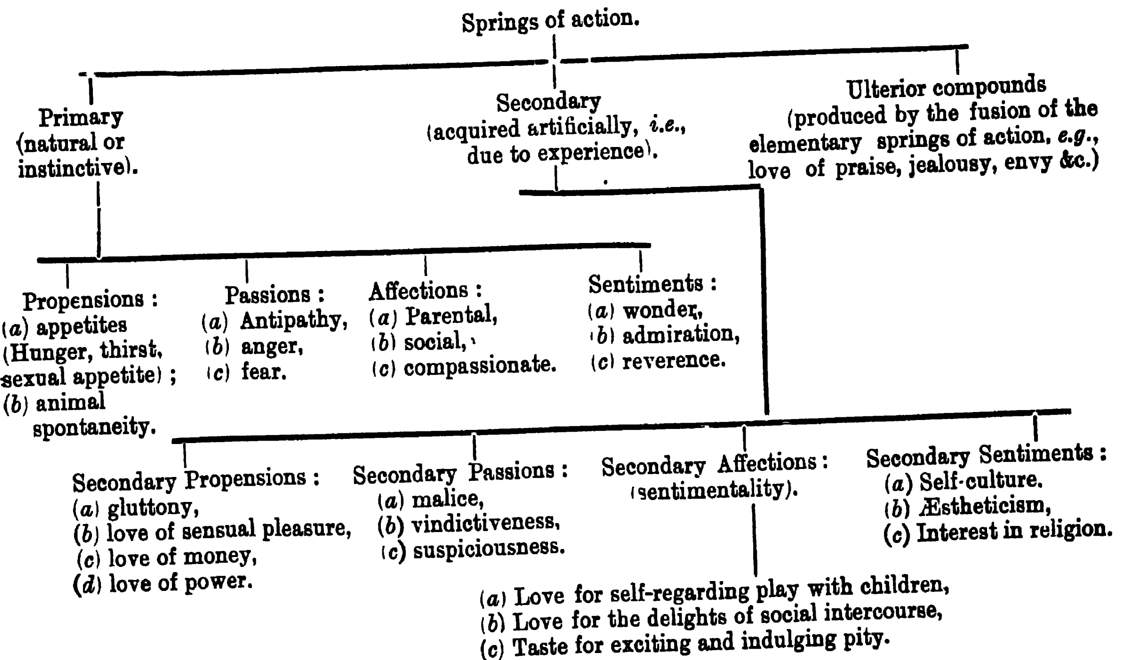
(*b*) *Æstheticism*—Love of Art and devotion to the pleasures of taste.

(*c*) *Interest in Religion and Morality*—Love or fondness for the discussion of moral and religious topics, simply because they are interesting, *i.e.*, because they bring pleasure.

Thus, by secondary sentiment, we mean love or fondness for the 'cultivation of intellectual, æsthetic, moral and religious sentiments for the sake of the pleasures which they bring'.

We have given above an account of the elementary springs or impulses, primary and secondary, as explained by Martineau. He also speaks of *compound springs of action* (*e.g.*, love of praise, jealousy, envy &c.) arising from the fusion of elementary springs according to the laws of association.

The above classification of the springs of action may be indicated in the tabular form given below :—


Springs of action.
Primary (natural or instinctive).
Secondary (acquired artificially, i.e., due to experience).
Ulterior compounds (produced by the fusion of the elementary springs of action, e.g., love of praise, jealousy, envy &c.)
Propensions : (a) appetites (Hunger, thirst, sexual appetite) ; (b) animal spontaneity.
Passions : (a) Antipathy, (b) anger, (c) fear.
Affections : (a) Parental, (b) social, (c) compassionate.
Sentiments : (a) wonder, (b) admiration, (c) reverence.
Secondary Propensions : (a) gluttony, (b) love of sensual pleasure, (c) love of money, (d) love of power.
Secondary Passions : (a) malice, (b) vindictiveness, (c) suspiciousness.
Secondary Affections : (sentimentality).
Secondary Sentiments : (a) Self-culture. (b) Æstheticism, (c) Interest in religion.
(a) Love for self-regarding play with children,
(b) Love for the delights of social intercourse,
(c) Taste for exciting and indulging pity.

Remarks. It cannot be denied that Martineau's psychological classification of the springs of action possesses considerable merit. It gives us a clear exposition of their principal forms and varieties. It may be said, indeed, that his classification is incomplete, *e.g.*, in his list of the primary affections, he does not mention filial, fraternal and conjugal affections. Perhaps it would be better to use the single expression 'domestic affection' which covers parental, filial, fraternal and conjugal affections. It may also be said against his classification that in it he has mixed up impulses which are active tendencies with emotions and sentiments which are passive or affective experiences of mind. But this objection has little value, for, as we know, impulses have an affective basis. An impulse to act is a complex state which always originates in, and includes, a feeling, and that feeling is a feeling of uneasiness or pain rising out of some want or imperfection, whether actually present or only anticipated and therefore ideal (*Vide* pp. 44-45). As we have already said, every feeling is capable of becoming a spring of action—*i.e.*, of generating an impulse* or desire to act. (*Vide* foot-note, p. 88). Thus, anger prompts us to act for defence or retaliation; fear, roused by the thought of future injury, prompts one to act for self-preservation; the intellectual sentiment of wonder excites in us a desire to enquire into the nature and causes of things, and so on.

* It may be pointed out in this connection that the term 'impulse' may be used in wider and narrower senses. In the wider sense, it embraces all conscious tendencies to action, including the *blind instinctive tendencies* as well as *desires* with full consciousness of ends and the self. In the narrower sense, impulses simply mean blind instinctive tendencies. In this book the word has been used in the wider sense. Observe also that the term 'spring of action' is used to mean either the feeling of uneasiness rising out of some want, or the impulse to act arising out of the feeling. The ultimate spring of every psychical action is a feeling of uneasiness or pain rising out of some want or imperfection, and this

The above classification is sometimes described as the classification of motives (lit., moving forces).

§ 3. **Ethical classification or gradation of the springs of action (their moral order).**

As we have already said, it is based on the relative moral values of the springs of action. "The following list presents the series in the ascending order of worth; the chief composite springs being inserted in their approximate places, subject to the variations of which their composition renders them susceptible.

LOWEST.

1. Secondary Passions :—Censoriousness, Vindictiveness, Suspiciousness.
2. Secondary Organic Propensions :—Love of Ease and Sensual Pleasure.
3. Primary Organic Propensions :— Appetites.
4. Primary Animal Propensions :—Spontaneous Activity (unselective).
5. Love of Gain (reflective, derivative from Appetite).
6. Secondary Affections (sentimental indulgence of sympathetic feelings).
7. Primary Passions :—Antipathy, Fear, Resentment.
8. Causal Energy :—Love of power, or Ambition ; Love of Liberty.
9. Secondary Sentiments :—Love of Culture.
10. Primary Sentiments of Wonder and Admiration.
11. Primary Affections, Parental and Social ; with (approximately) Generosity and Gratitude.
12. Primary Affection of Compassion.
13. Primary Sentiment of Reverence.

HIGHEST." (*Types of Ethical Theory*).

feeling impels or prompts the self to act for overcoming it. In lower animals, the feeling impels to action in an automatic way. But in the voluntary action of man, it rises through thought to the form of *desire* which is a complex mental state involving the *feeling* of want, the *idea* of the *object* needed to relieve it, and a *longing* or incipient *impulse* to relieve it by realising the idea. (*Vide* Ch. IV, pp. 44, 45 ; also p. 49). Hence *desire* may be said to be the *spring of voluntary action*, and the term is sometimes used in this sense.

The above table indicates Martineau's theory of an absolute scale of worth or hierarchy of the springs of action. He arranges the springs in a graduated series, according to the varying degrees of their moral worth or value. According to him, "the springs of action have a fixed and unalterable order of moral worth, and form a hierarchy of rank, rising one above another in a scale of moral worth, from the secondary passions or acquired repulsions (malevolent impulses) at the bottom to moral sentiment or reverence at the top."

The *malevolent impulses* or the *secondary passions* are the lowest in the scale; they have their basis in a love of evil for its own sake, and are, therefore, never right under any circumstances. "They never quit the category of the bad."

Higher than these are the *secondary organic propensions* or acquired appetites, such as love of eating and drinking, love of ease &c., for the sake of the pleasures they bring. Though these may not be altogether wrong, they can never possess any degree of positive moral merit and are often injurious.

Above these are the *primary organic propensions* or *natural appetites*. Being necessary to the preservation of the individual as well as the species, they stand higher than the secondary propensions; but as they serve directly only the purposes of organic life, they occupy a low position in the moral scale.

Higher than these are the *natural propensities to physical activity or exercise and repose*, expressing, as they do, 'the animal phase of human nature,' the appetites corresponding to the vegetative only.

Love of gain has a higher rank, because, though self-regarding, it involves intellectual exercise, and because wealth constitutes 'the means and material of altruistic beneficence.'

In this way, Martineau proceeds and finally places *reverence* at the top of the scale.

What, then, is Martineau's account of moral judgment? We know that moral quality is seated in a voluntary act. Now, every voluntary action involves a conflict of two rival springs, impulses or motives (of which one is higher and the other lower in moral worth), and a choice between them. In other words, in our voluntary activities we have always two rival springs before us, and we have to choose between them. When there is a conflict of rival springs or motives, our conscience (which means *sensibility* to differences of higher and lower, better and worse, among the springs of action) gives us the immediate feeling that one is superior to the other in respect of moral worth. In other words, it intuitively recognises that one is higher and the other lower in moral worth, and our duty consists in choosing the higher spring or motive and acting according to it to the rejection of the lower. An action, therefore, is right, if we choose what conscience intuitively recognises as the higher of the two alternative springs; and wrong, if we choose the lower alternative. It must not be forgotten, however, that, according to him, a spring which is lower in one case—*i.e.*, when compared with one alternative, may be higher in another case when compared with a different alternative; and the corresponding action which was wrong in the former case will be right in the latter. To take a symbolical example: A and B are two rival springs in a given case of voluntary action; and our conscience intuitively declares A to be of higher worth; hence we act rightly if we choose A, and wrongly, if we choose B. But in another case where B and C are the rival springs, B may be superior in moral worth to C, and we act rightly if we follow B. Take some concrete examples: Suppose, in a given instance, 'love of culture' and 'love of gain' are the rival springs; here our conscience intuitively judges 'love of culture' to be of higher worth. But in another case where 'love of culture' and 'compassion' come into conflict, our conscience declares 'compassion' to be

of superior value. Thus, one and the same impulse (*viz.*, love of culture) has different moral values in different cases. Again, "suppose we ask whether it is right to be angry; we must first enquire with what impulse has anger, in a given instance, come into conflict; suppose that the other impulse is a secondary social affection, an inducement to cultivate social pleasures with a person whose conduct has been grossly scandalous—then it is right to be angry, it is wrong to suppress anger for the sake of mirth and jollity; but suppose the other impulse is compassion, awakened by the sight of a repentant sinner—then still to harbour anger against him, or to refuse to forgive him, is wrong, is an offence against 'reason and right.' "*

We see, then, that, according to Martineau, the moral quality of an impulse or spring of action cannot be cognised unless it is contested by a rival impulse. "Their moral valuation intuitively results from their *simultaneous appearance.*" In this way Martineau concludes that the springs of action arrange themselves upon a scale of worth, every one of them lying between a lower and a higher, is right in competition with the former, wrong when resisting the latter, and cannot be judged without reference to its alternative. (*Vide* the table given before). Thus the rightness of an action depends on its position in the scale as compared with its alternative. †

* Prof. M. Sen, Elements of Moral Philosophy.

† "Every action is right which, in presence of a lower principle, follows a higher; every action is wrong, which, in presence of a higher principle, follows a lower." (Types of Ethical Theory, p. 270). It should be carefully borne in mind that Dr. Martineau's ethical gradation of the springs is based on his peculiar theory of conscience. According to him, conscience is an innate and unerring faculty of intuition which directly reveals to us, not the absolute moral value of a particular action, but the relative moral values of two conflicting springs, impulses or motives. The essence of conscience is "sensibility to the gradations of the moral scale." It may be added in this connection that, in Martineau's opinion, the moral distinction between any two springs in the graduated series is absolute or unconditional; it is unalterable by variations of circumstances.

General objections.

(*a*) Martineau's theory may be looked upon as a form of Moral Sense Intuitionism, and the objection to it is partly the same as to other forms of the Moral Sense theory. (*Vide* Ch. IX, pp. 117-120).

(*b*) The ethical gradation of the springs of action is not wholly the result of intuition or immediate apprehension. "The scale of moral worth which Martineau takes to be the standard of all moral judgment, is evidently a product of philosophical reflection, such as cannot possibly be present to every mind."

(*c*) Ethics, as the Science or Philosophy of morality, cannot rest contented with a mere tabulation of results. It cannot be satisfied with 'a mere inventory of facts or catalogue of intuitions.' It aims at explaining them by general principles and finally by reference to a single central or fundamental principle. A bare statement that one impulse is superior or inferior to another in moral worth is not enough; Ethics seeks to ascertain the ground of this distinction.

(*d*) A *fixed* scale of moral worth is really impracticable. Take any pair of impulses that you like, and you will find that each is sometimes right and sometimes wrong according to circumstances and that there is no uniform principle of order. "No such *universal* relation of higher and lower subsists between any pair of impulses as is here affirmed; the higher and the lower are only so *generally*, not *always*," *e.g.*, in a conflict between compassion and resentment, "it is by no means to be laid down as a universal principle that compassion ought to prevail; resentment, when it is directed against wrong, and operates in aid of justice, is to be regarded as a salutary balance to the weakness of pity." "Its suppression would be gravely mischievous."*

* Dr. Sidgwick, Lectures on the Ethics of Green, Spencer and Martineau, p. 355 *et seq.*

(*e*) In fact, Martineau's scale is too abstract to be of any practical value. Abstract impulses or emotions, as such, apart from the concrete circumstances which give rise to them, have no moral value. They must be judged by reference to their concrete circumstances. Martineau himself is constrained to admit that we cannot "assign to fear, simply as such, a uniform moral value relatively to other springs of action. Fears cannot be appraised without reference to the worth of the objects feared.........The egoist will have fears only for himself; the benevolent largely for others; and the moral quality of these fears will be imported simply from the affections that inspire them." (Types of Ethical Theory, Vol. II, p. 198).

(*f*) In concrete cases of moral judgment, there is no room for degrees of moral worth. We do not ascertain the comparative moral worth of contending or hostile impulses and assert that one is *better* or *worse, higher* or *lower*, than the other. In every concrete case we have to choose between two alternative courses, one of which is regarded for the time being as 'absolutely right' and the other as 'absolutely wrong'; and we judge each of the alternatives by reference to the moral ideal and actual circumstances. "We never characterise our moral acts as more or less good, or greater or smaller evil. In any particular case there are two courses open to us, which are relatively the best and the worst for the time being."

(*g*) It is impossible to prepare a complete list of all the concrete impulses with their relative moral values. This is practically admitted by Martineau himself, when he calls his table "merely tentative" and says that "the extreme complexity of the combinations renders the task of drawing up such a table precarious and difficult." (Types of Ethical Theory, Vol. II, p. 129).

CHAPTER VIII.

Postulates of Moral Judgment.

From what has been said before about moral judgment, it is easy to see that every moral judgment presupposes (i) Personality, (ii) Reason and (iii) Self-determination. These are the "postulates of moral judgment," without which moral judgment is impossible. Hence they require special consideration in Ethics. In this chapter we proceed to consider them fully.

(1) *Personality.* The central fact of morality is what is called personality. It is the basis of moral life. Moral judgment presupposes the existence of an agent or person endowed with the power of apprehending moral principles and acting according to such knowledge. As has been already said, the real object of moral judgment is a rational agent—"a person doing," and the subject passing a judgment is also a personal being who judges himself as well as other persons. Moral obligation or law becomes absolutely meaningless, if there be no personal agent who can act either according to or against it. As Calderwood observes, "Personality is the basis of morality. Where there is no knowledge of Self, as the intelligent source of action, there is no discrimination of motive, act and end ; and where such discrimination does not exist, there is no morality. The knowledge of moral distinctions, and the practice of morality, are, in such a case, equally impossible." (Handbook of Moral Philosophy, p. 14).

What, then, is involved in the conception of 'personality'? What is meant by a 'person'? The conception of personality involves that of self-conscious and self-controlled reality. What makes a person to be a person is self-consciousness and self-controlled activity. A person is a being who is conscious of himself in and through his own mental states and processes—who is aware of them as *his own* and of

himself as the *subject* of them, and who has the power of freely and rationally determining his own actions. To quote Calderwood again, "Self is known, not merely as Intelligence, but also as Power. I am a self-conscious, intelligent, self-determining power .....Personality thus involves self-conscious being, self-regulated intelligence, and self-determined activity." (*Ibid.*, p. 12).

It will be seen from this that the view of Sensationistic or Empirical Psychology that the self or personality is a mere aggregate of inner experiences—a conglomeration of conscious states and processes—takes away all meaning from morality. In fact, experience itself becomes impossible without a permanent self-conscious reality as the experiencing subject. A true Psychology tells us that the human self is an individual *personal* reality—a repository of power—a centre of rational activity and is the ground of all experience. We cannot think of states and activities without thinking of something of which they are the states and activities—we cannot think of feeling, thinking and willing without thinking of something that feels, thinks and wills and gives to these processes their unity and connection as functions of one reality. The states and processes of consciousness are but empty abstractions apart from the mental substance or entity underlying and supporting them and manifesting itself through them. The Empirical theory, though pretending to be based on "experience," ignores the most fundamental fact of experience on which all knowledge is built, *viz.*, the fact of self-consciousness—the fact that the self is conscious of itself as the reality which feels, thinks and wills, *i.e.*, as the permanent subject of successive states and acts, and not merely as the series and sum of them. It is the self-conscious mind which, as an active rational principle, makes even outer experience by reaction on, and interpretation of, the impressions imposed on it from without.

Thus personality is the basis of our mental and moral life.

(2) *Reason.* All moral judgments presuppose *Reason* which, in the form of Conscience and Understanding, enables us to determine the rightness and wrongness of actions and thereby our duties in particular cases. It is reason that gives us a knowledge of the moral standard and of the actual circumstances and thus makes moral judgment possible.*

(3) *Self-determination.* Finally, moral judgment presupposes self determination. We have seen before that the object of moral judgment is voluntary or intentional action which involves as its essence an act of choice or self-determination—a determination to act in a definite direction after due comparison of the rival claims of conflicting desires. Thus moral judgment presupposes that the self possesses the peculiar power of determining the direction of its own activities according to ideas, of identifying itself with one particular idea and desire in preference to others and projecting its own vital energy (so to speak) into the activity of realising that chosen idea.

We see, then, that moral judgment presupposes the power of free choice in man. In fact, the problem of freedom of will is vitally connected with the problems of our moral life. As

* Reason means *rational capacity*, *i. e.*, the power of interpreting or understanding. The different intellectual faculties are all applications of reason. A distinction is generally drawn between the discursive and the intuitive employments of Reason or Intelligence. Intuitive Reason or Intuition is the power of the mind by which it immediately perceives the truth of things without reasoning or inference. Discursive Reason implies the power of reasoning or inference from facts supplied by intuition. Reason or intelligence as *intuitive* gives us particular facts of experience as well as the *a priori* first principles. Reason as *discursive* arrives at truth by inference from facts and principles supplied by intuition. Moralists of the Intuitional School hold that Intuitive Reason gives us moral principles or truths, and Discursive Reason applies them to concrete cases. See Chapter IX.

D'Arcy says, "Morality cannot accept the theory of necessity, because that theory destroys responsibility. If, in all his actions, a man is controlled from without, praise and blame, approval and disapproval, reward and punishment, rest upon no real basis. But if will is self-determination, if every man must trace his actions to himself ultimately, then, when he sins and suffers, he has no one to blame but himself. Responsibility resumes its meaning. Morality becomes possible." (A Short Study of Ethics, p. 25).

Some moralists are of opinion that the question of free will is immaterial in Ethics. But a little reflection is sufficient to show that Determinism or Necessitarianism takes away all meaning from duty or obligation, merit and demerit, virtue and sin, remorse, responsibility and penalty. If our volitions are in the iron grasp of necessity, if we are powerless to go against inclinations and circumstances, we are no better than inanimate objects governed by uniform mechanical laws, and moral obligation and willing obedience to moral law become meaningless. If, as this view supposes, a man cannot but act in a certain direction, if he cannot help performing what he does, why should he be held responsible for his act ? Why should we attribute merit or demerit to an agent for his action, seeing that he could not have acted otherwise ? Why should we admire the virtuous and condemn the vicious ? Are not men, on this supposition, made virtuous or vicious only by circumstances ? If character is the outcome of necessity, it is merely a passive product and can no more be an object of moral criticism than a determinate current of water or wind. Consistently with Determinism, we should admire virtue, only as we admire the beauty of a natural object ; for virtue is but a necessity of nature. Again, what justification is there for punishing a guilty person, seeing that he has no control over himself and is a mere creature of circumstances ? It is said that infliction of punishment is necessary for

regulating human conduct. But all such talks become puerile, if the doctrine of necessity be accepted. There can be no meaning in regulation or correction, if it be true that human actions are the necessary results of circumstances.

And finally, does Determinism leave any room for the feeling of remorse? We are haunted by remorse after the performance of a wrong act, only because we feel that it was in our power not to have done it, and that we are responsible for having done it and have incurred guilt. Remorse implies a consciousness of freedom.

We conclude, therefore, that moral judgment postulates self-determination or freedom of will. As Dr. Martineau remarks, "Moral judgment credits the ego with a selecting power between two possibilities and stands or falls with this." (Types of Ethical Theory, Vol. II, p. 40.) In fact, "either free will is a fact, or moral judgment is a delusion" (*Ibid.*, p. 41); and Kant and his followers go so far as to base their belief in free will solely on moral grounds.* "Thou *oughtest* implies thou *canst*" is the famous saying of Kant. The convictions that it is our *duty* to act so and so, that we are under an *obligation* to do so, and that we are *accountable* or *responsible* for what we do, would be impossible, if we were not conscious at the same time of being free to act so or otherwise. When we feel that we *ought* to will so and so, we feel at the same time that we *can* will so—that we ourselves determine the direction of our will. Necessity would make duty, responsibility, justice as meaningless in the case of man as in that of lower animals.

* In his "Critique of Theoretical Reason" Kant is an agnostic and says that metaphysical knowledge is unattainable. In his "Critique of Practical Reason" he says that our practical reason or moral nature compels us to supply ideas of God, soul, freedom of will, and future life and to postulate their truth. Our certainty as to the realities is based on the intuitions and requirements of our moral nature.

NOTE ON THE "FREE WILL CONTROVERSY".

The question as to the nature of human will has been the subject of a long controversy. Some have maintained the doctrine of freedom of will, while others have gone so far as to suppose that "will, in all its operations, is subject to the same necessity which binds the physical effect to the physical cause. 'Free Will' and 'Necessity' have been party war cries for generations."*

The real question at issue is this : Does the self in some way determine its own volitions without being itself determined to do so by anything else ? If so, then human will is free. Or, are human volitions determined by motives and circumstances acting from without ? To state it differently : Is there something that determines a man to will what he wills, so that he could not do otherwise ? Is his willing or not willing a thing dependent on antecedent circumstances, and these on others, and so on, like physical events ? Is his willing caused by something outside himself over which he has no control or by something in his own nature over which he has no control or by both combined, so that his act of will is determined as rigidly as the flow of water or the fall of stones ? If so, he is subject to necessity as commonly understood.

The problem of Free Will and Necessity, though a psychological and metaphysical one, has, as we have seen before, an ethical significance. As D'Arcy says, "If the freedom of the will in every sense be given up and Necessity prove victorious, the ethical 'ought' is left without meaning, and morality becomes a polite fiction." (A Short Study of Ethics, p. 22). In fact, the conception of the freedom of the will, alien as it may be to positive science, is indispensable to Ethics and Jurisprudence ; since, in judging that I 'ought' to do anything, I imply that I 'can' do it, and similarly in praising or blaming the actions of others, I imply that they 'could' have acted otherwise. If a man's actions are mere links in a chain of causation which, as we trace it back, ultimately carries us to events anterior to his personal existence, he cannot really have either merit or demerit ; and if he

* D'Arcy, A Short Study of Ethics, p. 22.

has not merit or demerit, it is repugnant to the common moral sense of mankind to reward or punish—even to praise or blame —him (see page 104).

Now, it is not possible to deal adequately with the problem of Free Will and Necessity in an elementary ethical treatise like the present one. A brief account of the controversy is given below :

1. *Necessitarianism* or *Determinism* is the theory that acts of will or volitions are determined by antecedent circumstances, and these by earlier ones, and so on. The principle of causation —that one event is caused by another, and that by another, and so on in an unbroken chain of causes and effects—applies to human volitions, just in the same sense as to physical events. Hence, if all the circumstances were known, the future actions of men could be predicted as infallibly as the movements of the planets and the eclipses of the sun and the moon—being determined by antecedent events in just the same sense.

Now, the antecedent forces directly determining a person's volitions are his *motives*, *desires* or *impulses*, and these, again, depend on prior circumstances. There is no voluntary action that does not spring from a motive or desire of some object. When there is but one motive or desire present, then that motive determines the action. When several motives are present simultaneously, then there is a conflict among them, and the strongest prevails, represses the rest for the time being, and determines the volition of the moment.

In other words, volition is always determined by the strongest motive or desire present at the moment. Volition is, in fact, nothing but the strongest desire or impulse of the moment asserting its supremacy over weaker ones and working itself out into action.

What, then, determines the comparative strength of desires or motives and thereby determines volition ?

The strength of desires or motives is determined by antecedent circumstances. It is determined

(1) partly by the outward circumstances in which the individual is placed and the states and wants of the organism ;

(2) and partly by the mental character and constitution of the individual, which, again, is determined (i) partly by inheritance from previous generations, and (ii) partly by the circumstances under which the individual has been brought up.

And these conditions, it will be seen, are such as the individual did not himself make, and are determined again by earlier conditions, and these by still earlier ones, and so on indefinitely. Thus every act of volition may be said to be a focus in which many forces meet and combine to produce a *resultant*, and this resultant is the act of volition, so that the volition is determined by antecedent forces as much as any physical event is. J. S. Mill, who is a typical determinist*, says that the causes or antecedents determining volitions are "desires, aversions, habits and dispositions, combined with outward circumstances suited to call those incentives into action. All these, again, are effects of causes, those of them which are mental being consequences of education and of other moral and physical influences." (Mill's Examination of Hamilton's Philosophy, p. 561).

The doctrine of Necessity or Determinism is explained by D'Arcy in the following words :—"The determinist holds that in every case volition is determined by the strongest motive. In most cases the man yields at once because there is just one motive influencing him at the time. But sometimes there is a conflict. Opposing motives meet in his mind, and whichever motive is strongest prevails and, consequently, determines the action. But, in no case, according to this theory, can the man be said to be self-determined. The mind is regarded as a field whereon motives of many sorts contend and decide. Action always follows, and must follow, the strongest motive ; just as the physical effect always follows, and must follow, the physical cause. The determinist goes further still and refers all motives to facts and events which he regards as independent of the will. He makes the decisions of the self arise ultimately by physical causation out of the not-self. Motives, according to this theory, originate from the interaction of

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* See Logic, Book VI, Ch. II, and Examination of Hamilton, Ch. XXVI.

character and circumstances. Any one who knew a man's character and circumstances accurately, could foretell his conduct with unerring precision. Character alters, of course, during life, but it alters according to necessary laws. It must be traced ultimately to circumstances, the constitution of the man's bodily organism, the things and events he has seen and experienced, and certain mental predispositions which are his by heredity."*

It should be pointed out in this connection that Sensationism, Materialism and Pantheism all lead to the doctrine of Necessity or Determinism. According to Sensationism, mind is merely the aggregate of conscious states and processes—ideas, feelings and desires. Consistently with this view, volition must be regarded as consisting in the automatic process by which one motive or desire asserts its superior strength over its rivals in the conflict of motives or desires and thereby works itself out to the exclusion of the rest; and the strength of the dominant desire is determined by antecedent circumstances which, again, are determined by earlier ones, and so on to infinity. The same conclusion follows from Materialism which recognises no substantial reality of mind and regards it as merely the series and sum of conscious states, and these conscious states as nothing but the inessential and accidental by-products of the motions and mutual resistances of the molecules of the organised matter which we call the brain. It is the physical or material forces of Nature, chemical, thermal, electrical, that do all the work of life and mind—mind being only the stream of consciousness, and consciousness being only a passive product of the friction of the physical forces, like light and heat. Thus mind is a passive product, and all its activities are determined from without, being nothing but the resultants of conflicting and combining forces, like the motions of a planet or a comet.

Pantheism which is the extreme form of Monism also yields the same Necessitarian conclusion. According to Pantheism, there is but one self-existent reality, substance or power. and all the finite things and minds composing the world-system

* D'Arcy: A Short Study of Ethics, pp. 29-30.

are but its self-transformations or modes without any individuality or independent causality of their own. It is evident that, from such a theory of the world identifying the finite mind with the Infinite Mind, Determinism or Necessitarianism must follow as a logical consequence.

Now, modern Determinists or Necessitarians, in defence of their view that every volition is made to be what it is by antecedent causes outside of itself, appeal—

(1) To Psychology of voluntary action—volition, they say, is determined by the strongest motive.

(2) To a naturalistic, materialistic, or pantheistic theory of the world.

(3) To the axiom of causality—that every event must be determined by a cause, so that the cause being present, the effect must follow, and the cause being known, the effect can always be deduced and foreseen. This is a universal and necessary truth and admits of no exception. Now, it is argued that the 'Liberty theory' would make the act of willing to be an event without a cause whether in the nature of the agent or outside it—*i. e.*, it would make the act of volition an absolute beginning, an uncaused cause, which is inconceivable in a finite being.

(4) To the possibility of foreknowledge.

It is possible not only to predict future physical events, but also, to a great extent, the future actions of men. Now, the possibility of pre-vision implies pre-determination. Physical events like eclipses can be anticipated beforehand, only because they are determined by causes according to uniform laws, so that, knowing the causes, we can infer the events. Similarly, if voluntary actions of men can be foreseen, this can be only because they are determined by antecedent causes with the same uniformity as physical events, so that, when we know the antecedent circumstances, we can infer and foresee the actions.

And this is confirmed, among other ways, by statistics of marriages, crimes, suicides, and other voluntary actions. The numbers are very nearly the same every year under the same circumstances—just as much the same as non-voluntary and

physical events, so that one class of events seems to be determined by causes as much as the other.

And Theology tells us that God can foresee all the actions of men. This, too, implies pre-determination of human actions. God can foresee human actions, because He has determined them beforehand.

II. The theory of *Free Will, Autonomy, Liberty* or *Self-determination* is the view that the self determines its own volitions from within itself, without being determined to do so by anything else.

The Libertarians or the advocates of the doctrine of free will argue rightly on their side that

(1) The Psychology of will on which Determinism is based is an erroneous one. A close examination of the facts of our inner life reveals that the strength of motives or desires depends essentially on the mind itself, and not on antecedent circumstances. It is the mind itself that determines the direction and strength of its own desires by the exercise of its own reason. It is true that mind is acted on by forces from without, producing impressions and exciting feelings and desires in it ; but it is itself at the same time a centre of energy which reacts from within on the external influences. It is not wholly a passive product (as the other theory assumes), moved at random by forces acting on it from without, but is an active, rational principle which puts forth energy of its own to resist external forces and determines the direction of its own activities. Freedom of will manifests itself in free choice between alternative courses of action, guided by the rational judgment of the agent, and concentration of energy upon the chosen one.

(2) Freedom of will does not imply that volition is an event without a cause. The self itself causes it, and it does so freely without being determined to do so by anything outside itself. It determines its volitions according to reasons which lie within its own nature.

(3) The argument from foreknowledge is also misapplied by Necessitarians or Determinists. If different persons be placed in the same circumstances, their *wants* or *needs* will be very much

the same. Hence also their *desires* or *motives* will be very much the same, because what is best for one will be best for the others.

Therefore, under the same circumstances, they will choose and act similarly, and yet there will be nothing in this contrary to free will. Men having the same motives or ends will act in the same way, and yet they will act freely. Thus the actions of even free agents can be foreseen and predicted, if their motives and circumstances be known. "That different persons act in the same way when they have the same reason for doing so, is not inconsistent with their acting freely."*

(4) The doctrine of freedom of will is supported by the Idealistic theory of the world and man's relation to it—which is the most correctly reasoned metaphysical theory. According to Idealistic Metaphysics, the human self is a finite reproduction or reduplication of the Absolute Mind which evolves the great world of nature. The self is thus *above Nature* in a sense instead of being its passive product. It shares in the productive, self-regulating power of the Absolute itself—in the ultimate self-determining power which produces and determines the series of outward events in time, without being determined by them.

(5) Necessitarianism is quite inconsistent with what self-consciousness tells us regarding ourselves. We are clearly conscious in every action that we are free to do it or not to do it; and after its performance, we feel that it was in our power not to have done it, that we are responsible for its performance, that we have merit for it, if it has been a good action, and that we have incurred guilt and are liable to punishment if it has been an evil one, and are, therefore, haunted by remorse. All this clearly implies a consciousness of freedom. Thus the belief in free will is based on the evidence of self-consciousness.

* Theologians argue that Divine foreknowledge is not inconsistent with human liberty. Temporal succession, they say, is due to mere human limitation. To God time is 'one eternal Now', so that in His case the distinction of prior and posterior disappears altogether. He sees the future as present; He does not infer it from the past. Past, present and future are all present to Him intuitively. He thus foresees the actions of men without determining how they shall act.

Conclusion. We conclude, therefore, that human will is essentially free. It must be borne in mind that freedom of will does not imply a power of acting without motives.* It is a power of choosing and determining which motive shall be realised, or, to be more precise, it is the self's power of determining from within, by its own thought, what its desires shall be and which of them shall be realised. Ethics as the science of morality is possible only on the supposition that the human self has the power of adapting its desires, and determining the direction of its own actions, towards its own highest good, and therefore towards those proximate ends which it discerns to be conducive to that good. In other words, Moral Science assumes that the human mind possesses the power of *rational self-determination.*

It cannot be denied that spontaneous, instinctive and inherited tendencies enter to some extent into the conscious life of man and help to determine its desires and activities. But in rational minds such tendencies become more and more subjected to idea or thought, so that the self acquires the power of controlling and directing its activities towards the realisation of those ends which reason discerns to be conducive to the highest good, and this self-control through reason is capable of being realised more and more in the course of mental development, which consists in a gradual triumph of reason over automatic impulse. Indeed, this self-control or freedom is part of that highest realisation or perfection of self which is the ultimate end of all rational endeavour.†

* Some thinkers have gone so far as to suppose that mind can determine actions without any reason or motive whatever—that motives have nothing to do with the determinations of will. This is called the doctrine of Indeterminism or Liberty of Indifference. But this view is open to objections :—

(i) It is psychologically untenable, for the materials for an exercise of will must always be supplied by impulses. As Leibnitz says, "A mere will without any motive is chimerical and contradictory."

(ii) "Will rushing blindly into activity without any guiding reason, as according to this view, would not differ from physical forces acting at random without any guiding plan, which is extreme materialism."

† It should be borne in mind that man as a finite being has only *relative freedom.* God the Absolute is alone absolutely free.

CHAPTER IX.

CONSCIENCE OR MORAL FACULTY.*

§ 1. Conscience may be defined as the faculty or mental power by which we distinguish right from wrong. "It is, so to speak, the light which discloses the moral qualities of acts and guides our conduct in the moral sphere."

Now, different views of Conscience or Moral Faculty are possible, corresponding to the different possible views of the moral standard. Our view of the faculty which perceives and judges depends on our view of the quality which has to be perceived and judged and therefore on the standard of ethical goodness.

Hence the different views of the moral faculty should be considered in relation to those of the moral standard.

I. The Legal theories suppose no special faculty of moral judgment. If the rightness or wrongness of an action consists simply in its conformity or non-conformity with prescribed external command or law, the faculty requisite for moral judgment will be simply the power of discerning the meanings of prescribed laws and the power of forming general ideas of the classes of actions commanded and forbidden by the laws and of understanding thereby whether a given new action is in conformity or out of conformity with the prescribed law, together with the power of representing before the mind by imagination the rewards and punishments which will follow obedience and disobedience. Thus no special faculty is implied in moral judgments according to Legal or Jural Theories. They suppose nothing more than ordinary experience, understanding and imagination.

But as we reject the legal theories of the standard, this view of the moral faculty falls to the ground along with them.

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* Beginners are advised to read this chapter after they have finished reading the chapters on the theories of the moral standard.

(For the criticism of the legal or jural theories, see Chapter X).

II. We next come to the views of Moral Faculty or Conscience as maintained by Hedonists.

According to Hedonists, pleasure is the highest good, and an action is right or wrong according as it is conducive to, or subversive of, pleasure. But since Hedonism assumes two main forms, *viz.*, Egoism and Altruism, we have to consider the view of the moral faculty or conscience implied in each.

(*a*) Egoistic Hedonism makes the pleasure of the self or the agent himself the end of life and thus the standard of rectitude. It recognises no special faculty of judgment. It identifies conscience with prudence. Man, according to this view, has no innate power of distinguishing the right from the wrong. The Moral Faculty is a 'calculating faculty.' In the words of an acute writer, Egoistic Hedonism "will suppose merely that we can learn from experience what things are conducive to our pleasure or pain; and have power of drawing inferences from what has happened in the past to what will happen in the future; and power of vividly conceiving, or picturing in thought, our own possible future happiness or misery, *viz.*, as a motive to work for obtaining the one and avoiding the other; and the power of forming, by means of imagination, a more or less definite conception of the greatest happiness of our life as a whole, and of what actions will lead to it." In short, Egoistic Hedonism presupposes a power of inferring or calculating, from the data supplied by past experience, what will be conducive to pleasure and pain in the future, and the power of imagining future pleasures and pains of the self. Thus, Conscience or Moral Faculty, according to this form of Hedonism, is identical with Prudence. It involves self-love and a power of anticipating or calculating the future consequences of our actions to ourselves.

But Egoistic Hedonism is untenable, being inconsistent with morality properly so called; and therefore the view of conscience implied in it has also to be rejected.

(*b*) Altruistic or Universalistic Hedonism makes universal happiness or happiness in general the standard of rectitude. Accordingly, it supposes, not merely a power of inferring from past experience that such and such actions will lead to happiness or misery, and a power of imagining or picturing in thought the happiness and misery which they will bring, but also, and, more especially, a power of entering into and feeling the feelings of others and thereby understanding the ways in which others are affected by our actions. In other words, Altruistic Hedonism will require additional capacities of *sympathy* or *fellow feeling* and other acquired disinterested feelings (due to the principles of association and transference of interest), prompting to disinterested actions. Thus the moral department of our nature, according to Hedonists, includes intellectual as well as emotional elements, but the essence of Hedonistic or Utilitarian conscience* is constituted by acquired feelings of sympathy for other persons and habitual liking and disgust towards certain forms of actions affecting others, associated and fused together into one complex mass of sentiment and prompting us to perform acts that are conducive to the general well-being and deterring us from performing selfish and cruel actions. Non-evolutional Hedonism, which is purely empirical and recognises no innate tendencies and *a priori* intuitions, supposes that

* A distinction is sometimes drawn by Hedonists between the Moral Faculty and Conscience. The former is looked upon as intellectual—as a mere calculating faculty; the latter as emotional. *Vide* § 2. On account of the view thus taken of conscience, it is sometimes named by them as the "Moral Sense". This name, however, has been used in a different sense by Hutcheson and Shaftesbury, with whom Moral Sense is an innate capacity or power of perception. *Vide Intuitionism* below.

conscience is produced in every person by the circumstances and experiences of his own life. Evolutional Hedonism looks upon it as the result of the accumulated experiences of all our ancestors, transmitted to us by inheritance.

(For a full account and criticism of the Hedonistic theory of Conscience, see notes at the end of this chapter).

III. We next come to the Intuitional account of Conscience. According to the Intuitional theory of morality, knowledge of moral distinctions is obtained intuitively. Actions are right or wrong, not because they are attended with pleasure or pain, but because they are what they are. In other words, they are right or wrong according to their own intrinsic nature. Rightness and wrongness are attributes inherent in the form and nature of the actions, and, as such, are discerned intuitively, by contemplating the acts within our minds, without reference to their ends, results or consequences. Hence the moral faculty or conscience is a faculty of intuition or immediate knowledge.

But among Intuitional moralists, two theories of Conscience are current : one of them views conscience as the *Moral Sense* analogous in its operation to the faculty of perception, and the other views it as the *Moral Reason*. Hence the Intuitionists are divided into two schools, called the *Moral Sense School* and the *Intellectual* or *Rational School*. We have to consider their views separately.

(*a*) *The Moral Sense Theory*. Thinkers of the Moral Sense School describe Conscience or Moral Faculty as the moral sense or faculty of mind which instantly discerns moral goodness and evil by a kind of sensation or taste, independently of reason or thought. It is, they say, a faculty of internal perception which immediately recognises the moral qualities of acts. We have an internal sense for intuitively apprehending moral quality, just as we have

external physical sense-organs for perceiving the qualities of external things. Our moral sense makes us sensible of the qualities of conduct in a way analogous to that by which the physical senses make us sensible of the qualities of external things. Just as we perceive qualities of external things through the medium of and in terms of the sensations which they occasion in us, so we perceive the moral qualities of acts through and in terms of the agreeable and disagreeable feelings which the acts occasion in us—agreeable in the case of rightness, and disagreeable in the case of wrongness. (*Vide* Chapter V, § 4, D). "On contemplating actions, we experience a feeling of an agreeable or disagreeable kind, and discerning the character or quality of these actions by means of the feeling which they awaken, we pronounce them to be good or bad." The theory of an internal 'moral sense' apprehending moral quality has been held by Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Ruskin, Martineau and many others.* It may be stated here that the moral sense theory has undergone considerable change in the hands of Dr. Martineau. His theory has been fully explained and criticised in Ch. VII, § 3. With him Conscience is "sensibility to the various gradations of the moral scale"—*i e.*, it is sensibility to the differences of higher and lower, better and worse, among the springs or motives. It gives us an immediate feeling that, of two rival springs or motives in a given case, one is higher than the other in respect of worth or quality. This moral quality in respect of which one is felt to be superior to the other is described as simple, unique and *sui generis* (of a kind by itself), bearing no analogy to any other quality.

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* Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and Ruskin have been called 'Æsthetic moralists', and the Moral Sense or Faculty spoken of by them has been described as the 'Æsthetic Sense', as they often speak of the moral sense as analogous to the sense of beauty. A full account of the Æsthetic theory will be found later on. See Chapter XIII.

Criticism of the Moral Sense Theory. The theory is open to several objections. Of these some have been mentioned in Ch. V, § 4, D. We may here add the following :—

(i) The theory of a special 'moral sense' analogous to external senses makes moral cognition an inessential function of mind rather than an essential one. We know that one may be without the sense of smell, hearing or vision, and yet be a person all the same. In other words, the integrity of mind as a whole is not destroyed, even though a particular sense is dispensed with. So, if there is a special moral sense, a person may be without it without ceasing to be a person.

(ii) The theory assimilates moral perception to sense-perception and moral quality to the sense-qualities of things. It really places moral quality on the same level with secondary qualities of matter, like heat, smell, colour. Just as we know and think of these qualities through and in terms of the sensations, so we perceive moral quality and think of it through and in terms of the feeling which it produces in us. In other words, we know it as being in itself something which causes in us a certain kind of feeling or sensation. The theory thus makes our knowledge of moral quality only indirect and symbolical.

(iii) The theory is inconsistent with the well-known facts of diversity of moral judgments and moral progress. We know that men often differ in their moral estimates. We know that what has been considered right in one age or in one place has often been considered wrong in another. It appears that men have been learning gradually by a slow mental development from age to age what is good or bad in conduct and rising only slowly to a higher and clearer conception of it. How, then, can we, in the face of these facts, admit the existence of a moral sense analogous to physical senses ? "If we had a special moral sense for discerning moral rightness as we have for discerning qualities of

taste, smell and colour, we should expect to find as little diversity in the judgments of different times about the moral qualities of actions as about the sense-qualities of things; and expect as little progress in the one kind of knowledge as in the other."

(iv) Consistently with the Moral Sense Theory, it is impossible to detect an error in moral judgment or to convince a person of his mistake. This is possible only by an appeal to reason which alone can override a decision of sense. The facts that errors are made and that it is possible to detect them tell against the theory of a special moral sense intuitively perceiving the moral qualities of particular acts.

(v) The Moral Sense theory leaves no room for penitence and conversion which express changes wrought in the soul by rational conviction.

(*b*) *The Rational theory.* According to "Rational" moralists, Conscience is Reason or Intelligence intuitively apprehending or discovering the first principles of morality. There are "eternal and immutable" principles of morality which are ultimate, universal, necessary, self-evident and unquestionable, and these are known intuitively by Conscience (the Moral Faculty). Conscience cannot err and cannot be educated. "An erring conscience is a chimera." "There is no such thing," says Kant, "as an erring conscience." "As well propose to teach the eyes how and what to see, and the ear how and what to hear, as to teach Reason how to perceive the self-evident truths, and what truths are of this nature. All these have been provided for in the human constitution." (Calderwood, Handbook of Moral Philosophy, p. 81).

What, then, is the mode or process of moral judgment according to this theory? A moral judgment is the application of a universal and self-evident truth to a particular case. "Moral judgment does not result from comparison of

individual objects, but from comparison of a particular act or series of actions with a *general truth*, acknowledged as an imperative of rational life." We see, then, that, though the general principles are known *intuitively* by Conscience, moral judgments are *inferential*, involving application of the principles to concrete cases. It should be borne in mind, however, that, in our ordinary moral judgments, we have only an *implicit* knowledge of moral principles.

But the question may be asked : if it be true that Conscience is present in all men as the discoverer of universal moral truths, if it cannot err and cannot be educated, how is it that there is such a thing as diversity of moral judgments ? Whence arises the dispute, if conscience unerringly reveals to all men the same general principles ? The answer generally given by intuitionalists of this school is that "men differ, not as to principles, but as to details of application." As has been said above, a moral judgment is the application of a universal or self-evident truth to a particular case. Hence a moral judgment may be erroneous, though Conscience unerringly reveals moral principles. The error lies in the *application* of moral principles, and *not in their apprehension.* It is maintained that, though the first principles of morality are intuitively known, "their full meaning is not at once apparent to any mind, even the most highly disciplined. Thus ideals vary." "How much is involved in a moral principle becomes gradually apparent as we proceed to adapt it to particular cases." Thus this theory admits the necessity of both experience and reflection. "Intuition does not deliver us from the need of reflection." In fact, it is urged that, "though the moral principles are the same in all, yet their significance and application may vary with age, temperament, inclination, education and experience, and so an act which is regarded as right by one individual may be viewed as wrong by another."

This theory that Conscience is Reason or Intelligence intuitively discovering or apprehending the first principles of morality underlies the thought of the Rational or Intellectual school represented by Kant, Reid, Stewart, Calderwood and many others.

Criticism. The fundamental defect of Intuitionism is that it simply tells us that such and such actions are right, without telling us *why*. It does not explain the principles or discover their rational warrant. But it is necessary that these principles should be examined, explained and justified. We cannot regard the principles of moral life as *inexplicable* facts which demand an unquestioning obedience on our part. We must discover their rational warrant. We must find some ultimate good, the amount of realisation of which will determine the morality of actions. It will be clear afterwards that these principles "are explicable in the light of that total good for the self which involves the transfiguration of sensibility under the control of Reason." In other words, the moral principles find their explanation in the theory of self-realisation (Perfectionism or Eudæmonism). The self is realised in and through conformity to them. "It is necessary to refer to the self, to all that is possible for a man to become, to that large and ever growing life which is his inheritance, in order to estimate the value of an action."

IV. We are thus led to the theory of conscience implied in Perfectionism or Eudæmonism by which is meant the theory that the highest good consists in self-realisation or the perfection of one's own essential nature attained by his own voluntary effort.

The Eudæmonistic theory of Conscience differs from that of the Rational Intuitionists in this that it involves a deeper understanding of the bearing of the moral principles on the progress of the self towards perfection.

Thus, according to Perfectionism or Eudæmonism, Moral Faculty or Conscience is fundamentally *Reason* or Intelligence considered as the power of forming an ideal of the perfect self and of understanding what actions and rules of action are consistent with and conducive to self-perfection and are therefore binding on us. Conscience implies man's rational insight giving him a conviction that such and such forms of conduct are included within his function as a man among men and are essential to the completeness and perfection of his own nature; and this conviction, rising into emotion, tends to constrain him to identify himself with such actions.

Conclusion. What, then, is the true view of conscience? It will be now easy to see that Eudæmonism, rightly understood, will provide us with a true theory of it. The old theory of conscience that "it is an innate and inexplicable power of moral discrimination, sitting apart from the rest of human consciousness, like the priestess in the oracle at Delphi, and authoritatively imposing its decrees upon the human will" can no longer be maintained. For this old theory is opposed to the teaching of modern Psychology which rejects the view that mind is an aggregate of faculties and looks upon it as an organic unity; and it is also inconsistent with the modern idea of morality that "morality is free obedience to a self-imposed law." "The ought of duty," says Prof. Mackenzie, "is not a command imposed upon us from without. It is the voice of the true self within us. Conscience is the sense that we are *not ourselves*; and the voice of duty is the voice that says, 'to thine own self be true'." (Manual of Ethics, p. 254). "Conscience," says Prof. Muirhead, "is the whole or true self claiming to legislate for the parts. Its claim is the claim of the self, as a conscious and rational being, to judge any particular manifestation of itself in voluntary action. Its voice is the voice of the true self, or the self as a whole, which, addressed to the false or

partial self of particular desires and passions, rightfully assumes the tone of command...Man's freedom just means his power of being moral—*i.e.*, of obeying the imperative of reason or of his true self." (Elements of Ethics, pp. 78, 79). Thus, Eudæmonism or Perfectionism rejects the view that conscience is an inexplicable and mysterious faculty with no organic relation to self. It rejects also the Hedonistic view that conscience has been developed out of non-moral elements. It holds that the ground of morality, of a desire to pursue an ideal of perfection, lies in the very constitution of human mind. It agrees with Intuitionism in holding that there is an 'eternal and immutable' element in morality, that the germs of morality are *inherent* in human nature, and that the moral principles are not derived by inductive generalisations from the experiences of pleasure and pain. But it cannot hold that conscience is fully developed from the beginning or that moral truths appear to us all at once in their full scope and meaning. On the contrary, they appear to us in their true colours only gradually and in the course of years and ages.*

Thus Conscience is fundamentally reason or intelligence, which is the guiding principle of human life—the source of all moral truths and principles. But, as rational cognition and emotion are inseparable, our actual conscience may be said to be a complex power involving rational as well as emotional capacities. Indeed, it may be ultimately said that conscience is the whole rational self judging and feeling in a particular way—it is the rational self having the consciousness of obligation, *i.e.*, the conviction that this act or class of acts is essential to its own perfection and is thus obligatory.

And this theory recognises the element of truth that is in the statement, "the voice of conscience is the voice of God".

* See Paul Janet's Theory of Morals, pp. 348-351.

The Metaphysical theory underlying Perfectionism is that the human soul is a finite reproduction of the Divine mind. Man's 'higher self' is thus identical with the Divine Being. If, then, from one point of view, moral law may be said to be self-imposed, from another point of view, it may be said to be imposed by God upon man.

§ 2. **Conscience and Moral Faculty.** A distinction is drawn by some moralists between Conscience and Moral Faculty. Thus, (i) according to Dugald Stewart, "Conscience coincides exactly with the moral faculty, with this difference only, that the former refers to our own conduct alone, whereas the latter is meant to express also the power by which we approve or disapprove of the conduct of others". This distinction, however, is neither reasonable nor necessary. We judge our own conduct as well as that of others in the same way. The mental process is essentially the same, and the principles employed are also the same. (ii) A distinction between Conscience and Moral Faculty is sometimes drawn also by Hedonists, though in a way different from the above. J. S. Mill, for instance, observes in his 'Utilitarianism' that conscience is emotional, while the moral faculty is intellectual. "The internal sanction of duty is a pain, more or less intense, attendant on a violation of duty. This feeling, when disinterested and connecting itself with the pure idea of duty and not with some peculiar form, or with any of the merely accessory circumstances, is the essence of conscience; though in that complex phenomenon as it actually exists, the simple fact is in general all encrusted over with collateral associations, derived from sympathy, from love, and still more from fear; from all the forms of religious feelings; from the recollections of childhood and of all our past life; from self-esteem, desire of the esteem of others, and occasionally even self-abasement. * * * Its binding force consists

in a mass of feeling which must be broken through in order to do what violates our standard of right, and which, if we do nevertheless violate that standard, will probably have to be encountered afterwards in the form of remorse." (Utilitarianism, pp. 41-44). Referring to the moral faculty, the same writer says in another place, "Our moral faculty is a branch of our reason, not of our sensitive faculty; and must be looked to for the abstract doctrines of morality, not for perception of it in the concrete" (*Ibid.*, p. 3). But against the view that conscience is essentially emotional, it may be said that the distinctions of right and wrong, obligation and responsibility, depend, not on blind feeling, but on rational conviction.

Mill, as has been said above, distinguishes between conscience and moral faculty, making the latter an intellectual faculty. But with him the moral faculty is nothing more than a calculating faculty—a power of calculating, from the data supplied by past experience, what will be conducive to pleasure and pain in the future—a power of 'computing the balance of pleasures and recording the courses of action calculated to secure it." Such a faculty, however, has nothing to do with conscience or morality—there is nothing moral or immoral in this process of intellectual calculation. As on this supposition, wrong-doing is no more than wrong calculation, it is not worse or more shameful than wrong calculation elsewhere—*e.g.*, "the calculation of an accountant preparing his balance sheet." To use the words of Prof. Green, "It is a doctrine which offends the unsophisticated conscience of mankind," for it reduces the distinction between virtue and vice to one between prudence and imprudence and identifies *remorse* with *regret.** It does not explain the nature of moral *authority*, nor does it therefore account

* 'Remorse' is the feeling consequent on wrong-doing. 'Regret' is the feeling consequent on the making of an intellectual error.

for the feelings of *shame* and *remorse* which accompany wrong-doing.

§ 3. **Conscience and Prudence.** A distinction between Conscience and Prudence is commonly drawn in the following way. Prudence is egoistic, but Conscience is altruistic in tendency. Prudence is concerned with self-interest, Conscience, with duty. "Conscience is an affair of insight, Prudence is an affair of foresight." Conscience judges the moral values of acts, while Prudence calculates, from the data supplied by experience, the pleasurable and painful consequences of such acts to ourselves. Prudence weakens character and conscience strengthens it, for the former fosters gratification of sensibility, and the latter, self-restraint. Conscience keeps up the harmony of our constitution, while Prudence tends to destroy it. Thus the two are in conflict with each other.

The word 'Prudence' has been taken above in a narrow sense. In this sense "it implies a calculation of the immediate results of our acts with a view to secure the greatest amount of pleasure." But in a wider and higher sense, prudence is identical with what is called wisdom. Higher prudence or wisdom takes into account the immediate as well as the remote consequences of our acts, *e g.*, the effects on our health, the praise and blame of society, approbation and disapprobation of Conscience &c. Thus it is not inconsistent with Conscience. Indeed, true wisdom seeks happiness as well as excellence.

As Prof. H. Stephen says, "Though prudence is not itself the highest standard, nevertheless as judged and regulated according to a higher standard, prudence is generally a duty. It is our duty to use all possible precautions and means for the preservation and welfare of self, wherever these means are consistent with the preservation and welfare of others; and the tendency to resist gratifications, which may prove detrimental to the welfare of self, is a virtue." (First Principles of Moral Science).

NOTES.

Note 1. The Hedonistic theory of conscience.

This has already been briefly explained in § 1 of this chapter. It is the question of the origin of conscience and moral feelings that is the principal ground of difference between the older or Non-evolutional Hedonism or Utilitarianism of Bentham, James Mill, J. S. Mill and Bain, and the Evolutional Hedonism of H. Spencer, Leslie Stephen and others. According to Non-evolutional Hedonism, conscience is the necessary product of the circumstances and experiences of each individual during his own life-time; according to Evolutional Hedonism, it is a product of the accumulated experiences of the race preserved by inheritance. These two views have to be considered separately.

(*a*) Nature and origin of Conscience according to Non-evolutional Hedonism. A theory of conscience in harmony with a development theory of mind has been propounded by Hartley in *Observations*, 1, iv, 6; by James Mill in *Fragment On Mackintosh*; and by Dr. Bain in *Emotions and Will* and *Mental and Moral Science*. These philosophers all deny the theory of innate tendencies and *a priori* intuitions consistently with their Empirical Psychology and hold that conscience is developed in the life-time of every individual. We may briefly explain the Hedonistic theory in the following way, without referring to the view of any particular thinker of the Hedonistic School. Conscience is produced in every person by (i) automatic reproduction of the expressions and feelings of others rising into *sympathy*, and (ii) transference of interest from ends to actions, leading to other *disinterested feelings* in the same direction. Thus, (i) every one is born with an instinctive tendency to *automatic imitation*, and this produces a tendency to sympathetic feeling in the following way :—The child perceives the outward signs and expressions of feelings in others—sees the changes of countenance and movements and hears the exclamations. In observing and representing in his own mind these outward expressions of others, he automatically assumes the same expressions in himself—the idea of them filling the mind and

directing force into the same muscles and thus causing the same contractions, instinctively. But the muscular expressions thus assumed bring with them the state of mind of which they are the expressions, and thus through the *automatic imitation* of the expressions of others, the emotions of others are reproduced in his own mind. When this capacity of having the feelings of others reproduced in one is developed, it rises into that capacity of sympathy or fellow-feeling which is the basis of conscience.

(ii) Again, "the child finds that certain forms of action are followed by praise and blame, reward and punishment, from parents, teachers, friends, and by the admiration and disgust of society in general or by the penalties of law. These consequences produce feelings of pleasure or pain, hope or fear, pride or shame. After some repetition these feelings become permanently associated with these kinds of action and are excited and felt in connection with them ever afterwards and grow into permanent habits of liking and disgust towards such actions. These feelings, originally excited by the pleasurable and painful consequences to ourselves of certain classes of actions, become transferred to the actions themselves and thus come to be felt in connection with the actions even without original consequences. In other words, these feelings of liking and disgust become at last habits of *disinterested feeling*."*

Now, through the association of the above acquired

* The remarks of James Mill on this subject deserve to be quoted :— "We perform moral acts at first from authority. Our parents tell us that we ought to do this, ought not to do that. They have two sets of influences with which to work upon us, praise and blame, reward and punishment. The idea of ourselves performing certain acts is associated with the idea of our being praised and rewarded ; performing certain other acts, with the idea of our being blamed and punished, so closely that the ideas become at last indissoluble. And we find that not only our parents act in this manner, but all other parents. We find that grown-up people act in this manner not only towards children, but towards each other. The associations, therefore, are unbroken, general and all-comprehending."

tendencies, the capacity of disinterested feeling called conscience is produced.

Dr. Bain gives substantially the same theory. He says, "Conscience is an imitation within ourselves of the government without us." (i) The first lesson that a child learns as a moral agent is obedience. The child's susceptibility to pleasure and pain is made use of to bring about this obedience, and a mental association is rapidly formed between disobedience and apprehended pain, more or less magnified by fear. (ii) Respect or love for the parents may also induce the child to refrain from wrong-doing. To quote his own words, "A sentiment of love or respect towards the person of the superior infuses a different species of dread." (ii) Lastly, "when the young mind is able to take notice of the use and meaning of the prohibitions imposed upon it, and to approve of the end intended by them, a new motive is added, and the conscience is then a triple compound, and begirds the actions in question with a three-fold fear."

The view of J. S. Mill has already been explained and criticised in § 2. He distinguishes between conscience and moral faculty, by making the former *emotional* and the latter *intellectual.*

Criticism. The above theory is open to several objections:—

(i) The Hedonists try to derive the altruistic feelings from egoistic ones. But "Altruism accounted for in this way can hardly be more than ego-altruism."

(ii) The Hedonists suppose that altruistic or sympathetic feelings are developed in the life-time of every individual, and that every individual is at first without them. They thus evidently mean that these feelings are not at all essential to human life.

But it should be borne in mind that, as the essential altruistic impulses are indispensable to the perfection and indeed to the

* *Emotions and Will*, p. 286. Compare in this connection Schopenhauer's analysis of conscience into one-fifth, fear of man ; one-fifth, superstition ; one-fifth, prejudice ; one-fifth, vanity ; one-fifth, custom. Against this, we may here simply remark that such a mathematical calculation is not possible in mental and moral science.

very existence of the human race, they are instinctive and innate in human nature from the very beginning. We must not suppose that it is for their own pleasure that a mother loves and provides for her child, and a soldier sacrifices his limbs or his life in battle. The truth is that they are each obeying an instinctive impulse, which is essential, not only to the good of humanity, but also to the perfection of their own natures individually. Their conduct is essentially disinterested; and though disinterested conduct often brings happiness to self, it is by aiming at the happiness of others. "The mother's affection for her child, friendship which is carried 'greatly on one side without due correspondence on the other,' charity which spends out of its own abundance, are feelings which cannot be traced to the need of satisfying a selfish want."

The advocates of Psychological Hedonism contend that the altruistic desires have grown out of the egoistic in accordance with the law of transference of feeling. But they overlook the fact that, without a deep spontaneity, affection such as the mother's is unequal to the feat of absolute self-sacrifice demanded of it.

(iii) According to Hedonism of this form, conscience is a product of the circumstances and experiences of each individual. But this theory overlooks the innateness of the moral faculty. Conscience operates long before the accumulation of experiences on the part of the individual. Very early in the life of an individual, we notice instinctive aversions and preferences.

(iv) J. S. Mill draws a distinction between conscience and moral faculty. The objections to his view have been given in § 2 of this chapter.

(v) A close perusal of Dr. Bain's theory will show that he describes two stages of conscience, earlier and later. In its former form conscience is a compound of *emotions*, *e. g.*, hope of reward, fear of punishment, love or respect for parents &c. In its later form, it is prudence—"an *intelligent* forecast of the effects of actions." That conscience cannot be identified with prudence has already been clearly shown in § 2 & 3 of this chapter. In its earlier form, when such intelligent forecast is wanting, it is

regarded as a compound of emotions. But even if we grant that conscience is wholly emotional—that it is identical with moral sentiment, Dr. Bain's theory is not sound ; for, the compound of emotions with which he identifies conscience is not even equivalent to moral sentiment.

(*b*) Origin of Conscience according to Evolutional Hedonism. According to the supporters of this doctrine, the development of conscience is accomplished, not in the life-time of every individual (as supposed by older Hedonism), but during the life-time of the race, and with the help of natural selection and inheritance. We have been made to be what we are by inheriting the accumulated results of the experiences and acquisitions of all our ancestors. Among the tendencies that we have inherited, we have also inherited our sympathetic, altruistic and social instincts.

It is in this way that the Evolutionists try to reconcile the *a priori* and the *a posteriori*—the Intuitional and the Inductive—theories of morality. To our remote forefathers, conscience was a derivative faculty ; but to us, who have inherited the results of the experiences of all our ancestors in accordance with the law of heredity, it has become an innate faculty of moral intuition.

Criticism.

(i) This view is based on the theory of the hereditary transmission of acquired powers and tendencies which many believers in Evolution now deny (*e.g.*, Weismann and his followers).

(ii) Even if we believe that Spencer's theory of heredity is right, there is this fatal objection : Heredity cannot create a new faculty—it may only modify a tendency already existing. Indeed, the unmoral cannot evolve the moral, just as the addition of negative quantities cannot make a positive quantity. "Association or heredity cannot call into being a new idea, any more than it can teach the eyes to hear or the ears to see or convert prudence into virtue."

Note 2. Bishop Butler's theory of Conscience.

The interesting account of Conscience as given by Bishop Butler may be briefly stated here. Conscience is described by him as a "moral approving and disapproving faculty"—"a principle of reflection." Human nature involves two conflicting tendencies

or impulses—egoistic and altruistic. In other words, self-love and benevolence are two antagonistic tendencies in human nature. But mind is an organic whole—not a mere aggregate of unreconciled elements. There is a controlling principle in human nature—a principle of reflection—that guides and controls them ; and this is called conscience by Butler.

Thus conscience is superior to self-love and benevolence. Its authority is absolute, and its commands are absolutely binding on us irrespective of our will and assent. "Conscience is not only to be considered as what is in its turn to have some influence ; which may be said of every passion, of the lowest appetites ; but likewise as being superior ; as from its very nature manifestly claiming superiority over all others ; in-somuch that you cannot form a notion of this faculty, conscience, without taking in judgment, direction, superintendency. This is a constituent part of the idea, that is, of the faculty itself ; and to preside and govern, from the very economy and constitution of man, belongs to it. Had it strength, as it has right, had it power, as it has manifest authority, it would absolutely govern the world." (Sermon II).

Though Butler establishes the supremacy of conscience, he does not clearly explain its nature. He does not make it clear whether conscience is reason or a special and unique faculty of mind over and above Reason. As Calderwood remarks, "Butler has not gone with much care into the question as to the nature of conscience, but he has placed the fact of 'superintendency' or supremacy on such a basis that it has been admitted with wonderful unanimity by the upholders of most conflicting theories as to the nature of conscience". (Handbook of Moral Philosophy, p. 80).

CHAPTER X.

Ethical Standard.

Law as Standard.

§ 1. The central moral problem is the problem of the character of the moral standard by reference to which we are to judge the rightness or wrongness of an action. We have seen before that the fundamental question in Ethics is that of the exact significance of rightness and wrongness as attributes of actions. What is meant when we say that a person's action is *right* or *wrong* ? In what does the rightness or wrongness of an act consist ? And this is equivalent to the question : What is it that enables us to characterise an act as right or wrong ? What is the *test* or *standard* of rectitude ?

Now, the question of the true and ultimate moral standard has been answered differently by different schools of moralists. Thus the moral standard is conceived by some as *a law* or *laws*, agreement with which is essential to the rightness of our acts. Others have supposed that actions are right in the sense of being conducive to *pleasure*. Others have supposed that an act is good if it leads on to *perfection*. Our business now is to examine the different views of the standard of morality and to find out the true view. In this chapter we proceed to examine the theory which takes *external law* as standard.

According to some thinkers, the standard which enables us to estimate the moral goodness or badness of conduct is a law or system of laws imposed upon us externally or from without by the will and command of a superior power (God, society, government). The will of this power is believed to be absolute ; and laws imposed by this higher power are supported by rewards and punishments and communicated to us in some particular way, *e.g.*, by speech or writing.

It is clear now that, according to this theory, actions are good in the sense of being *conformable to law.* Moral judgment is simply the act of discerning whether any particular action is or is not in conformity with the prescribed law.

Thus, according to this view, "there is nothing naturally and essentially right in actions; that whatever is right or wrong must be made to be so by the will and command of some higher power; and that law, therefore, is not only *a* standard of conduct, but is *the moral* standard proper." In short, an action is called right, if it agrees with the law; wrong, if it does not agree with, or is in violation of, the prescribed law.

What, then, is the supreme power whose will is law? Whose will is the ultimate standard of right and wrong? Some say, it is the will of God; others say, it is the will of the state or Government (Ruler or the ruling body); others say, it is the collective will of society. It is obvious, then, that this theory assumes three forms. These will be separately considered. In the mean time we may point out the general objections against the legal system as a theory of morality.

(i) The legal theory substitutes self-interest for morality, prudence for virtue. As has been said before in Chapter II, § 3 & § 5, acts performed out of fear of punishment or out of expectation of reward may be prudent, but not virtuous. If an action is done under the compulsion of threatened punishment or for the sake of promised reward, it cannot have any positive moral merit. Thus we find that this theory takes away all meaning from morality.

(ii) The moral standard is an external and arbitrary code according to this theory. But the true moral standard cannot be arbitrary. "It must be something which commends itself to the reason and the heart; which can be understood

and felt; and which the self can therefore identify itself with, freely and intelligently."

(iii) Again, laws themselves presuppose a higher standard—they are only means to ends. They are themselves judged as good or bad. Thus a system of external laws cannot constitute the ultimate standard in morals.

We have said above that the legal theory assumes different forms according to what is conceived to be the supreme power whose will is law. Thus we may take Divine Law or Political Law or Social Law to be the moral standard. These are considered separately in the following sections.

§ 2. **Divine law as standard.** (*Theological* standard)—According to some thinkers (*e g.*, Descartes, Locke, Paley), Divine command is the test of rectitude. In other words, the ultimate standard of morality is the absolute will of God communicated to man either "by the light of nature or the voice of revelation." All truths—mathematical, logical or moral—depend on His arbitrary will—they are but His arbitrary decrees. Actions are right or wrong simply because God has commanded or forbidden them. Thus the distinctions of right and wrong depend on the arbitrary will of God, so that, if He likes, He can make right and wrong different from what they are now; *e.g.*, if He wills, He can turn infidelity to a virtue and fidelity to a vice. (*Vide* Chapter II, § 5). "Divine law is the true touchstone of moral rectitude, and it is by comparing actions to this law that men judge of the moral good or evil of their actions; that is whether as duties or sins they are likely to procure them happiness or misery from the hands of the Almighty." "The true ground of morality," writes Locke, "can only be the will and law of a God who sees men in the dark, has in His hands rewards and punishments, and power enough to call to account the proudest offender."

Criticism. This view is open to several objections :

(i) The most obvious objection to this theory is that, according to it, the motive for virtue or avoidance of sin would consist simply in the hope of reward or fear of punishment, and thus virtue would merge in prudence, morality in self-interest.

(ii) This theory practically denies God's perfection—it deprives God of all moral character ; for it assumes that the distinction of right and wrong is created by an act of arbitrary Divine will. Thus God is above moral law—His nature is morally blank, and He is an object of fear rather than of veneration.

(iii) The true view is, on the contrary, that God is the perfect being, and goodness or righteousness is an element of His nature. What is right or good is in harmony with His nature ; what is wrong or bad is repugnant to it. Thus the distinction of right and wrong ultimately rests on Divine Nature and is therefore necessary and immutable. To suppose that moral distinctions are arbitrarily created by God and are reversible by Him, is equivalent to supposing that He can act against His own nature which is completely rational and perfect ; but this is impossible. Every being must act according to or consistently with his nature, and no power—not even that of God Almighty—can produce the self-contradictory. Instead of supposing that acts are right or wrong simply because God commands or forbids them, we must suppose that He commands or forbids them *because* they are right or wrong.*

(iv) That Divine perfection or goodness, and not the

* To say that God must act according to His nature is not equivalent to saying that His power is limited. According to modern Theologians, God's omnipotence or almightiness does not imply His ability to go against His own nature or to accomplish a real contradiction ; it implies His power to do everything that is consistent with His nature —everything that is not in itself contradictory. He cannot bring about what is repugnant to His own nature. See Outlines of General Philosophy, Sixth Edition, p. 287, *foot-note*.

arbitrary Divine will, ultimately determines what is right, is supported by the admissions sometimes made by the advocates of the arbitrary Theological standard. Thus, Descartes constantly speaks of Divine perfection and veracity. Locke, too, speaks of Divine goodness guiding us and directing our actions to what is best. These admissions show that they, too, felt at times that God is essentially good, and that morality rests on His essential nature, and not on His arbitrary will.

§ 3. Political law as standard.

Some have supposed that political law—the verdict of the state – is the test or standard of right and wrong. Morality consists in obedience to the laws of the state. The state formulates a system of laws, imposes the laws upon its people and makes them obligatory by a duly appointed system of punishments ; and to judge whether an action is right or wrong, one has to compare it with the prescribed law. Thus the moral standard is a code of laws imposed upon the people by the state. "The Civil law alone is the Supreme Court of appeal in all cases of right and wrong." (Hobbes).

But there are several objections to this view also :—

(i) This theory, like other forms of the legal theory, abolishes the distinction between virtue and prudence, morality and self-interest. (See p. 135 & p. 137).

(ii) A system of political laws cannot constitute the ultimate moral standard, for such laws are themselves objects of judgment and are only means to an end (*e.g.*, the safety and happiness of the people).

(iii) It is impossible to formulate laws for all possible circumstances. Thus political laws cover only a fraction of our active life and cannot therefore constitute the standard by reference to which we may judge every possible case.

§ 4. Social law as standard.

According to some thinkers, morality depends on the

opinion of society collective. In other words, it is the will of society collective that is the standard of right and wrong. 'Right' means what society demands, and 'wrong', what society condemns and forbids. Thus the real standard of morality is constituted by the opinions, manners and customs of society. What is in conformity with them is right; what is contrary to them is wrong.

How, then, are the rules (the manners and customs) of society enforced? They are enforced by public sentiments of approval and disapproval, honour and dishonour (*e g.*, a man may be excommunicated or outcasted for not obeying the rules of society). "Society demands that all persons entering into it and sharing in its advantages shall conform to its manners and customs, and excommunicates them if they do not; and such conformity is morality. Society and morality are thus based on an implicit contract or covenant which every one is tacitly pledged to observe. Nothing is right or wrong in itself, but only by social rule and covenant."

Criticism. The special objections to this theory are:—

We know that social opinion is variable—it is found to change from age to age. The social manners and customs accepted in one period are often condemned as wrong in another. How, then, can they be safe guides in matters of conduct? How can they supply any uniform and consistent moral standard?

Indeed, it is a well-known fact that what is customary is not necessarily moral. The accepted manners and customs of a society are often questioned and made objects of moral criticism. We speak of customs and practices as good or bad, as moral or immoral, thus tacitly acknowledging the existence of a higher standard by reference to which even these are to be judged.

CHAPTER XI

ETHICAL STANDARD.

PLEASURE AS STANDARD (HEDONISM).

§ 1. We have seen above that the legal or jural theory is inadequate, inasmuch as it supposes law to be the final or ultimate standard of morality. Laws are undoubtedly standards of conduct, and in civilised communities conformity to them is, in the majority of cases, good or right, but they cannot be regarded as the ultimate standard. Laws are sometimes made objects of moral criticism—there are times when opposition to political and social laws is morally justifiable. A law without reference to an end is arbitrary and unmeaning. The question of the moral standard is not solved so long as we do not determine the true end of life, the highest good or the *Summum Bonum*.

Thus it may be argued that the goodness of actions must be judged by their tendency to promote the highest good of men. In other words, acts are to be judged good or bad by reference to the supreme end of life. "Every voluntary action implies an end; and, among ends, there is a gradation, culminating in the supreme end which is the goal of life." An act consistent with and conducive to the great end of life is good or right; an act inconsistent with or subversive of it must be pronounced as bad or wrong.

Now, some have supposed that pleasure is the supreme end of life or *Summum Bonum* of man. Actions are good only in proportion as they are conducive as means towards this ultimate end or good. This theory has been called Hedonism, because it makes *hedone* or pleasure the ultimate end or good.

Thus we should judge an act as right or wrong according as it tends to produce happiness or misery. "Actions are

right in proportion as they tend to produce happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness". "By happiness is intended pleasure and the absence of pain; by unhappiness or misery, pain and privation of pleasure." (Mill)*

This theory, it will be seen, attaches supreme importance to the sentient side of human nature. "Feeling is the highest function of mind. Reason and will are good only as means of procuring and maintaining feeling; but feeling itself is good only in so far as it is pleasurable." Hedonistic Ethics is therefore called the "Ethics of Sensibility".

§ 2. **Classification of Hedonistic theories.**

At the outset, we have to distinguish between *Psychological Hedonism* and *Ethical Hedonism*. The former is the theory that pleasure is the *natural* and *normal* object of desire. The latter is the theory that pleasure is the *proper* object of desire. According to the former, we naturally and always *do* seek pleasure; according to the latter, we *should* always seek pleasure. The former is simply a statement of *fact*, the latter is a theory of *value*, a theory of the ground upon which one form of action ought to be preferred to others. Though we are concerned in Ethics with Ethical Hedonism, we have to explain and examine also Psychological Hedonism, because the latter is often combined with and made the basis of the former. Ethical Hedonism, again, assumes two forms —*Egoistic* or *Individualistic* and *Altruistic* or *Universalistic.* Egoistic Hedonism makes the pleasure of the agent himself the end of life and the standard of morality. Altruistic Hedonism makes universal happiness or the greatest happiness of the greatest number to be the standard of rectitude. Each of these, again, may be (i) *Gross* or *Sensualistic* or (ii) *Rationalistic* or *Refined.* It may also be pointed out in this

* The theory is also called *Utilitarianism*, because, according to it, actions are to be judged right or wrong according to their *utility*— *i.e*, usefulness as means for the promotion of pleasure and prevention of pain. The term 'Utilitarianism', however, is now commonly used to mean *Altruistic Hedonism.*

connection that Altruistic Hedonism is *Evolutionary* or *Non-evolutionary*, according as it is based or not based on the theory of Evolution. The different Hedonistic theories (except Evolutionary Hedonism) are considered in the following sections.*

§ 3. **Psychological Hedonism.**

As has been said above, it is the theory that pleasure is the only natural end and motive of human action. Every one desires what he thinks will be pleasurable, and for the sake of the pleasure which he expects that it will give him. Thus the only natural object of desire and motive of action is pleasure, and in acting we always have the idea and desire of some pleasure in our minds as motive. Things are sought, not for their own sake, but only for the sake of the pleasures they will bring us. The predominant tendency in man is the gratification of sensibility. We see, then, that, according to this theory, life is one continuous pursuit of pleasure.

This view was held in ancient times by the Cyrenaics, and in modern by Hume, Bentham, J. S Mill, Bain, among others. J. S. Mill, for example, remarks, "Desiring a thing and finding it pleasant, aversion to it and thinking of it as painful, are phenomena entirely inseparable, or rather two parts of the same phenomenon; in strictness of language, two different modes of naming the same psychological fact: that to think of an object as desirable and to think of it as pleasant, are one and the same thing; and that to desire anything, except in proportion as the idea of it is pleasant, is a physical and metaphysical impossibility." (Utilitarianism, p. 58).

The advocates of Psychological Hedonism admit that there are apparent exceptions to this, but maintain that they do not affect the general principle. †

* For Evolutionary Hedonism, see Ch. XII.

† The Hedonists maintain that, though we generally seek objects for the sake of the pleasure they will give us, and not for their own sake, yet sometimes we may come to seek objects for their own sake according

An English poet has very well described the theory in the following words :—

"Whate'er the motive, pleasure is the mark ;
For her the black assassin draws his sword ;
For her dark statesmen trim their midnight lamp ;
For her the saint abstains, the miser starves ;
The Stoic proud, for pleasure, pleasure scorns ;
For her affliction's daughters grief indulge,
And find, or hope, a luxury in tears ;—
For her, guilt, shame, toil, danger, we defy."

Criticism.

A little reflection will show that Psychological Hedonism is not a sound doctrine. This doctrine means that pleasure is the ultimate object of every desire and that human volition is always determined by the idea of pleasure. In other words, it is pleasure that is desired, and not things for their own sake. But this is open to objections :—

(i) This is unpsychological. Normally, we desire some objective end other than pleasure, and when the object is attained, pleasure follows as a consequence. But this feeling is not sought beforehand. "Pleasure is the result of the satisfaction of a desire which is directed to an object. The feeling of satisfaction—pleasure or happiness—is by its very nature the accompaniment or consequence of attaining an object, and not itself the object." "The want or the end

to the principles of Association and Transference of Interest from ends to means. Pleasure is the end ; objects are means. When the attainment of an object yields pleasure, the idea of the object may become so closely associated with the idea of pleasure, that the interest is finally transferred to the object itself, so that the object, though it was originally sought as a means to pleasure, now comes to be sought for its own sake, *e g.*, a miser's love of money. Money is desired at first for the sake of the pleasure (comforts and gratifications) it procures, but afterwards it may be loved for its own sake, without any thought of such pleasure. A miser finds delight in the mere possession of money.

implied in a desire has for its object something other than pleasure which, like a subjective barometer, indicates that the object is attained." Indeed, there are many kinds of pleasure which cannot possibly exist if they are not preceded by certain desires for objects, *e.g.*, the pleasures of benevolent affections. As Prof. Mackenzie points out, "No one could possibly feel these pleasures unless he were first benevolent —*i.e.*,—had a desire for the welfare of others. In such a case, therefore, the very existence of the pleasure depends on the fact that desire is first directed towards something other than pleasure. It might even be argued that this is the case with all pleasures. Pleasure ensues upon the satisfaction of certain wants, and the wants must be prior to the satisfactions. We have a 'disinterested' desire for food, before we can have a desire for the pleasure that accompanies the taking of food" (Manual of Ethics, pp. 71, 72).

We see, then, that the real order of facts in rational action is normally this : The consciousness of want excites in us a desire for what will supply the want ; and the supply of the want gives rise to the feeling of satisfaction ; but this feeling is not itself the object of desire. We may desire food, wealth, health, honour, knowledge, virtue, each one of which yields an agreeable feeling when attained. Thus the primary direction of thought is towards an object, not towards the pleasure it is expected to yield. We do not generally look so far ahead as pleasure ; that is not what moves us. It must be admitted, however, that pleasure or happiness is sometimes sought or desired for its own sake. The agreeable feeling, arising from the attainment of an object, when once experienced, may become an independent object of desire, and the idea of it may move or induce us to act for its renewal, thus constituting "a secondary spring of action."

(ii) Even if we *do* desire pleasure, the best way to get pleasure is to forget it. Pleasure is best obtained when least

sought. A direct pursuit of pleasure is suicidal. The more directly and eagerly we seek pleasure, the less pleasure as a rule do we obtain. The more we are unmindful of it, the more do we get it. Even Mill admits that "only those are happy who have their minds fixed on some object other than their own happiness. Ask yourself whether you are happy, and you cease to be so."

Here, then, we have the fundamental *paradox of Hedonism* that "the impulse towards pleasure, if too predominant, defeats its own aim."* (Dr. Sidgwick). In the words of Prof. Dewey, "If any one violates the law of his own being by living upon his feelings rather than upon the objects to which those feelings normally belong, his power of feeling becomes gradually exhausted, and he defeats his own end. He commits emotional suicide." (Psychology, p. 299).

(iii) Mill's confusion arises from an ambiguity in the word 'pleasure'. It is (*a*) generally used to mean the agreeable feeling or the feeling of satisfaction arising from the attainment of some object and (*b*) sometimes used to mean an object that gives satisfaction. In this latter sense, we often speak of 'a pleasure' or 'pleasures' (in the plural), meaning thereby a concrete object or objects yielding pleasure. All objects of desire may be said to be *pleasures* in this sense, and we have no objection if it is said that we seek pleasures in this sense. For it is evident that if we desire anything, the attainment of it will bring at least a temporary feeling of satisfaction or pleasure.

* It may be said in this connection that the effect is specially visible in the case of our active enjoyments, pleasures of thought and study, pleasures of benevolent affections &c., *e.g.*, "The pleasures of thought and study can only be enjoyed in the highest degree by those who have an ardour of curiosity which carries the mind temporarily away from self and sensations."

Consequently, anything that we desire may be said to be 'a pleasure'—*i.e.*, something that will bring pleasure when attained. But it must be remembered that "the fact that we desire *pleasures* is no evidence that we desire *pleasure.* That we seek pleasures is a mere tautology. It means simply that we seek what we seek." (Prof. Mackenzie, Manual of Ethics, pp. 74, 75).

(iv) Even supposing that Psychological Hedonism is a sound doctrine, there is no necessary or logical connection between it and Ethical Hedonism. It is possible to maintain the one without maintaining the other. As Dr. Sidgwick remarks, "No cogent inference is possible from the psychological generalisation that the agent's pleasures and pains are the universal motives, to the ethical principle that his own greatest pleasure is for each the ultimate rational end." (Methods of Ethics, p. 41). Indeed, if we naturally and always *do* seek our own pleasure, what meaning is there in the precept that we *ought* to do so? As Prof. Mackenzie says, "Ethical Hedonism is scarcely compatible with Psychological Hedonism, at least in its most extreme form. If we always *did* seek our own greatest pleasure, there would be no point in saying that we *ought* to seek it; while, on the other hand, it would be absurd to say that we *ought* to seek the pleasure of others, except in so far as this could be shown to coincide with our own. Of course, if Psychological Hedonism be merely interpreted as meaning that we always do seek *pleasure of some sort*, then Ethical Hedonism may be understood as teaching that we ought to seek the *greatest* pleasure, whether our own or that of others. But, in any case, there is no necessary connection between the two doctrines." (Manual of Ethics, p. 212).

(v) It has been said above that there is no logical or necessary connection between Psychological Hedonism and Ethical Hedonism. The confusion between the two is partly due perhaps to the ambiguity of the word *desirable.* Here is

a passage from Mill's *Utilitarianism*: "The only proof capable of being given that an object is *visible*, is that people *actually see* it. The only proof that a sound is *audible*, is that people *hear* it, and so of the other sources of our experience. In like manner, I apprehend, the sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything is *desirable*, is that people *do actually desire* it." (Utilitarianism, p. 53). Now, Mill has failed to understand the proper significance of the term *desirable*. It is no doubt true that *visible* or *audible* means *capable* of being seen or heard. But the English word 'desirable' does not usually mean "what is capable of being desired." Desirable means what *should* be desired—what may be reasonably or legitimately desired. As Prof. Mackenzie remarks, "When we say that anything is desirable, we do not usually mean merely that it is able to be desired. There is scarcely anything that is not able to be desired. What we mean is rather that it is *reasonably to be desired*, or that it *ought* to be desired. When the Hedonist says that pleasure is the only thing that is desirable, he means that it is the only thing that *ought* to be desired. But the form of the word *desirable* seems to have misled several writers into the notion that they ought to show also that pleasure is the only thing that is *capable* of being desired". (Manual of Ethics, pp. 213 and 214).

§ 4. Ethical Hedonism—(*a*) Egoistic Hedonism.

It is the doctrine that every person ought to seek his own greatest pleasure. Actions are good or bad in proportion as they tend to promote or hinder ultimately the agent's own greatest pleasure—the moral standard being the general idea of those lines of action that are most conducive to his own greatest pleasure on the whole. In estimating the quantity of pleasure two points are generally taken into account, *viz.*, *intensity* and *duration*.

It may be pointed out in this connection that Egoistic

Hedonism as an ethical doctrine is generally combined with Psychological Hedonism according to which the ultimate object of desire to every individual is his own preservation and pleasure. In other words, it is said that every one naturally seeks his own pleasure and every one ought to seek his own greatest pleasure on the whole. The maxim of this system is : "Every one for himself."

But if it be true that every person naturally desires his own pleasure—if it be natural for every one to seek only his own interests, how are we to explain the origin of society and the social feelings and motives, and of political government? How is it that human beings, though naturally egoistic, have come to combine and co-operate in society, in which every individual is compelled to subordinate his own interests, more or less, to those of others? How is it that we are often led to promote the good of others? Hobbes and others explain the origin of society and Government in the following way :—

Society and Government owe their origin to the misery and insecurity of the primitive condition of man which was one of general strife, and the consequent rational desire for peace. Originally, men existed in a state of nature which was a state of universal discord and war. Men are naturally egoistic ; and in the original "state of nature," individuals lived separately and independently of each other, without common laws and institutions—each claiming and trying to appropriate for himself everything that was needful for his own preservation and enjoyment. Everybody cared only for himself and claimed everything needed to satisfy his own desires. Everybody thought he had a natural right to everything—"even to another's body" and thought himself quite justified in gratifying his appetites and passions as he pleased. Hence the primitive "state of nature" proved to be

a "state of warfare." Gradually individuals began to discover that their own preservation, safety and happiness depended to a considerable extent on the help and co-operation of other individuals. Hence at last they deemed it expedient to join together and form themselves into a community. They entered into a 'social contract' by which each individual agreed to subordinate his own good in some respects to that of others, and to contribute to the good of society as a whole, for the sake of the greater good he would receive from the co-operation of other individuals and the protection of society collectively. By this contract, all agreed to resign their natural rights in the hands of a common arbitrator, governor or ruler who would dispense them for the general good ; and all pledged themselves to obey the laws enforced by the governor for the general good, and the governor was vested with the power to enforce the submission of refractory individuals by punishment. In this way men formed themselves into states and societies by mutual compact.

Thus, according to Hobbes, society has an egoistic basis. He boldly declares that all the higher feelings and springs of action are modes of self-love. He tries to give an egoistic interpretation of all the disinterested affections and sentiments. *Benevolence* is the inclination to do good to others in the hope of obtaining greater good for ourselves in return ; and sometimes, to relieve the pain imposed upon ourselves by witnessing the sufferings of others, which we cannot help reproducing in ourselves by automatic imitation. *Pity* is this fiction or imagination of similar pain of our own, which arises in our minds on witnessing the sufferings of others. *Charity* is the pleasurable consciousness of our own superiority, which we experience in relieving the wants of others. *Friendship* is a consciousness of the pleasure and benefits which we receive from the society and assistance of another person. *Gratitude*

is a lively sense of future benefits, excited by benefits already received. *Reverence and Religious feelings* are cultivated as means of pacifying and securing the favour of supernatural powers. *

We may now compare the two forms of Egoism—Gross and refined.

(1) *Gross or Sensualistic Egoism.* This was explicitly taught in modern times by Mandeville and Helvetius. The teaching of Mandeville is that "man centres everything in himself, and neither loves nor hates, but for his own sake." Thus self-love is the only virtue. Selfishness, luxury, pride, enjoyment are all justified. According to him, "Private vices are public benefits."

Helvetius says substantially the same thing. Love or friendship has its basis only in want or self-interest. Happiness or bliss means the highest possible amount of physical pleasure. "Man being by nature sensible of no other pleasures than those of the senses, these pleasures are the only objects of his desires and passions."

But the typical form of Sensualistic Egoism is found in the teachings of Aristippus of Cyrene (B. C. 435-356). In fact, the Egoistic Sensualism of Mandeville and Helvetius is but a revival of *Cyrenaicism.* Aristippus recognises no *qualitative* differences among pleasures. According to him, the only good of life is the individual's own pleasure;

* The above is a brief account of *Hobbism* (Doctrine of Hobbes). It should be borne in mind that Hobbes combines his egoistic theory of the good with his legal theory of the standard. "The collective experiences of society (once established by social contract) and the deliberations of the legislator find out what rules of action are most conducive to the greatest pleasure of society collectively, and society and the state impose those rules on individuals as social manners and customs or as political laws, and make it to be the self-interest of individuals to submit to them by imposing penalties on their violation".

and all pleasures are alike in *kind* ; they differ only in *intensity* or *degree*. Hence intensity is the only criterion by which we are to judge the values of pleasures ; and physical pleasures, being the keenest, are the most eligible. Present enjoyments should never be sacrificed for the sake of future pleasures, for what is future is always uncertain. *We should fully enjoy the present.* To sacrifice the present to the future is unwarranted and perilous ; the present is ours, the future never may be. Let us cultivate to the utmost all possible capacities of enjoyment and gratify them to the utmost ; and in gratifying them, let us always utilise to the utmost all the opportunities of enjoyment afforded by the present moment. The past is dead and gone. The future is doubtful. The present is all that we have. Let us make the most of it. "Let us eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we may die."*

It is easy to see that Sensualistic Egoism, as explained above, is unreflective in character. "A life of feeling, pure and simple, heedless and unthinking, undisturbed by reason —such is the Cyrenaic ideal." "Not the Socratic prudence, but a careless surrender to present joys, is the true rule of life." "Bliss can be attained only by continuous momentary enjoyments—the summation of immediate gratifications—regardless of what is absent, the past or the future."

(2) *Refined Egoism.* The typical form of Refined Egoism is found in the teachings of Epicurus (341-270 B. C.), who advocates a more reflective form of pleasure seeking. Epicurus fully recognises the indispensableness of reason

* A similar doctrine was taught in ancient India by *Charvaka* and his followers. "The only end of man is enjoyment produced by sensual pleasures···While life remains, let a man live happily ; let him feed on *ghee*, even though he runs in debt." (*Madhavacharyya, Sarva-darsana-sangraha*, Ch. I).

in the conduct of life. Reason is the proper guide for the attainment of true happiness. According to him, (to borrow the words of Prof. James Seth), "the end is pleasure, but this end cannot be attained except under the guidance of reason; feeling would be but a blind and perilous guide to its own satisfaction. It is reason alone that makes possible the most perfect gratification of sensibility." He admits that we must be ready to sacrifice the present to the future, if the future is likely to bring greater happiness. It is not by cultivating our possible capacities of enjoyment, and thereby increasing our wants and desires, but rather by reducing our wants and desires within the narrowest limits and by learning to be content with little, that we can hope to attain happiness. "Felicity consists, not so much in positive pleasure, as in freedom from pain, and a calm and contented mind." The happiest life is one in which conflict and vain pursuit are shunned—it is "one of simple ease, good will, serene leisure." We should attempt to remove from our minds all possible causes of unrest and seek those pleasures which are most easily got and cannot easily be taken away. We should seek those pleasures that bring no pain and avoid those pains which bring no pleasure. Hence we should prefer mental pleasures to physical pleasures; for mental pleasures are pure, abiding and tranquil; but physical pleasures, though sometimes keener, are generally evanescent and attended with pain. In opposition to the Cyrenaic rule of life, he says, "When we say that pleasure is the end of life, we do not mean the pleasure of the debauchee or the sensualist, as some from ignorance or malignity represent, but freedom of the body from pain and of the mind from anxiety." "It is not an unbroken succession of drinking feasts and of revelry, nor the pleasures of sexual love, nor the enjoyment of the fish and other delicacies of a splendid table, which produce a pleasant life; it is sober reasoning, searching out the reasons for every choice and avoidance, and banishing those beliefs

through which greatest tumults take possession of the soul." (Wallace's *Epicureanism*, pp. 129, 131).

The four canons of Epicurus are : "The pleasure which produces no pain is to be embraced. The pain which produces no pleasure is to be avoided. The pleasure is to be avoided which prevents a greater pleasure. The pain is to be endured which averts a greater pain or secures a greater pleasure." (Lecky's History of European Morals, Vol. I, p. 14).*

§ 5. **Critical estimate of Egoistic Hedonism.**

(i) Egoistic Hedonism is often based on Psychological Hedonism which, as we have seen before, is not a sound doctrine. Besides, Egoistic Hedonism as an ethical doctrine is scarcely compatible with Psychological Hedonism in its extreme form. The latter rather precludes the former (See § 3, p. 146).

(ii) The advocates of Egoistic Hedonism in its extreme form forget that direct pursuit of pleasure generally its own purpose and that the more eagerly we hanker after pleasure, the less pleasure as a rule do we attain. (Paradox of Hedonism. See § 3, pp. 144, 145.) "The practice of Hedonistic observation and calculation has an inevitable tendency to decrease our pleasures generally." (Dr. Sidgwick). True happiness can be obtained, not by a continual hankering after pleasure, but by a disinterested discharge of the duties of life as they come. The life of pleasure-seeking is, by the very nature of the case, a "life of illusion and make-believe."†

(iii) Egoistic Hedonism asserts that man is naturally

* The above is a brief account of the teachings of Epicurus himself. Whatever may be said of his followers, his own teachings were of an elevated character.

† Some Egoists are fully aware of this, and hence the pessimistic tendency of their doctrine.

egoistic and that all the higher feelings and springs of action are modes of self-love. But this is going too far. The truth is that human nature involves egoistic as well as altruistic elements. Indeed, a closer examination of human nature reveals that man is more altruistic than egoistic—"we live more for the sake of others than for our own." Even among lower animals it is found that their energies are not spent simply in the satisfaction of their self-regarding wants. Even they give themselves up for the benefit of their offspring. As Spencer points out, "Without *gratis* benefits to offspring, life could not have continued." (Principles of Ethics, Vol. II, p. 5). Prof. Stewart, quoting Spencer, says, "Although Egoism, biologically considered, comes before Altruism, yet, 'from the dawn of life altruism has been no less essential than egoism.' 'Self-sacrifice is no less primordial than self-preservation.' Scientific Ethics has to recognise the fact that Egoism and Altruism co-exist." As has been already pointed out, the essential altruistic impulses are innate and instinctive in human nature from the beginning, inasmuch as they are essential to the perfection and the very existence of the human race. (See Ch. IX, Note I, pp. 130-131). In fact, as Prof. Mitra observes, "Social feelings are too deep-rooted in our nature to be exploded by the artifice of a few egoistic writers." (Elements of Morals, p. 301.)

(iv) Egoistic Hedonism fails to supply us with a *uniform standard* of morality. We know that men differ in respect of their susceptibility to pleasure and pain. What is pleasurable to one person may be painful to another. What is most pleasurable to one is far less or least pleasurable to another. How, then, can there be a uniform moral standard ? And if there be no uniform moral standard, morality itself is abolished ; what is right to one may be wrong to another.

(v) Egoistic Hedonism insists on the calculation of the comparative values of pleasures ; but this is an extremely

difficult task. We know that our experiences are generally of a mixed character, varying indefinitely in degree, duration and quality. We know that pleasures differ so much from each other as to be practically incommensurable; and the same may be said of pains. Further, there is such a thing as variation in mood, temperament and circumstances. It is a well-known fact that one and the same individual may form different estimates at different times as to what is likely to be conducive to his own happiness or misery. How, then, can we say, in the face of these facts, that Hedonistic calculation is practicable?

(vi) Sensualistic Egoism is totally inconsistent with morality properly so called. The theory ignores rational self-restraint in which morality consists, and substitutes license for it. Hence it has always presented a repulsive appearance to the moral consciousness of mankind. In its extreme form it supposes that reason is a drawback of human nature and that animal life is the happiest. But none would be glad to exchange a life of intelligence and conscience for one of mere sense and feeling. Man cannot accept the theory without doing violence to his own nature.

(vii) The Refined form of Egoism as advocated by Epicurus himself is undoubtedly more reflective than Sensualistic Egoism and has not the defects of the latter. But its chief weakness consists in its discouragement of active, strenuous life, as inconsistent with the Epicurean calm of mind. It forgets that life is to be judged, not simply by feeling, but by activity.

Further, Epicureanism as an egoistic theory regards the good of self and that of others as opposed and exclusive. But a true moral theory shows that the good of the individual and the general good are reciprocal and relative to each other (See Perfectionism, Ch. XV).

(viii) It is no doubt true that feeling has a place in moral life. We know that a feeling of satisfaction attends virtuous activity. In other words, virtuous activity is always pleasant, though no properly virtuous act is performed with the *idea* of pleasure. It would be perhaps better to call the satisfaction that accompanies virtuous activity by the name of *happiness* or *blessedness*, and to restrict the term *pleasure* to other forms of agreeable consciousness—*e. g.*, the feeling resulting from the stimulation of a passive capacity of sensation. Thus interpreted, pleasure will be possible for both men and animals, but happiness will be possible only for a rational being and will arise from the rational self's consciousness that it is, or is becoming, what it should be. Happiness is thus possible to the hero in the moment of danger and the martyr on his way to death. "Pleasure is ordinarily a momentary enjoyment arising from the satisfaction of a passing desire or wish; and at most it may embrace the gratification of several desires." "Happiness is a lively mood resulting from harmony among desires." It is a rational satisfaction arising from a due regulation of desires. It is not equivalent to the "pleasure of the moment," however intense it may be, nor to "a sum of pleasures," obtained by gratifying several desires in succession, nor even to "a balance of pleasure over pain." "It is rather a 'synthesis of pleasures,' obtained by subordinating, and, if necessary, excluding, certain pleasures, the net result being a complete (though not intense) satisfaction attendant on the consciousness that one is all that he should be."

§ 6. Ethical Hedonism—(*b*) Altruistic or Universalistic Hedonism (Utilitarianism).

The trend of modern Ethics is generally altruistic. In recent times none maintains the Egoistic system as a sufficient theory of morality. An attempt has accordingly been made by the Hedonists to transform their theory from

Egoism into Altruism or Universalism. According to *Altruistic Hedonism*, what we ought to aim at is pleasure in general—universal happiness—or, failing that, the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Actions are right or wrong according as they are conducive to or subversive of happiness in general. Our duty, therefore, is to promote pleasure—not our own pleasure alone, but that of others and all, so far as this may lie in our power. The theory is often called *Utilitarianism*, because, according to it, actions are to be judged according to their *utility* or *usefulness* as means for the promotion of general pleasure and prevention of general pain. The theory presupposes a developed capacity of *sympathy* or *fellow-feeling* which will impel one to promote the good of others and deter him from injustice to them.

It is to Hume, Bentham, Mill and Bain that we owe the substitution of general happiness for the happiness of the individual as the true end of life. As Bentham and Mill are recognised as the two most distinguished exponents of this doctrine, and as the view of Mill differs in an important respect from that of the school of Bentham, we should consider them separately. According to both of them, universal pleasure is the supreme end in morals. But Universalistic Hedonism supposes that we can represent possible future pleasures of ourselves and others in idea, compare them in respect of value, choose beforehand the best and adapt our actions so as to realise the best. In other words, it requires an estimation of the values of future pleasures. Hence the question arises : By what standard are we to estimate the values of pleasures ? Bentham holds that the only standard of value is *quantity* ; J. S. Mill holds that the *quality* of pleasures should also be taken into account. This is the main ground of difference between the system of Bentham and that of Mill. Their views are explained below.

I. *Benthamite Utilitarianism.* According to Bentham, the value of a pleasure consists entirely in the *quantity* of agreeable experience it gives. In other words, the only standard by which the values of pleasures are to be judged is *quantity*, so that any one pleasure is just as good as another—"push-pin is as good as poetry," if they are equal in quantity. But "quantity takes different forms. It takes the form of *duration* : of two pleasures otherwise equal, the more durable will be the better ; of *intensity* : one pleasure may be more intense than another of the same duration ; of *extensity* : one may be shared by a larger number of persons than another ; of *fecundity* : one may lead on to a number of others as consequences ; of *purity* : one may be more free than another from painful accompaniments or consequences." Bentham summarises his view on the point in the following mnemonic verses :—

> "*Intense, long, certain, speedy, fruitful, pure,*
> Such marks in *pleasures* and in *pains* endure ;
> Such pleasures seek, if *private* be thy end ;
> If it be *public,* wide let them extend.
> Such *pains* avoid, whichever be thy view,
> If pains *must* come, let them *extend* to few."

The above is an account of Bentham's *dimensions of value* in pleasures and pains. The first six *criteria, viz., intensity, duration, nearness, certainty, purity* and *fruitfulness* may be accepted by both the forms of Hedonism—Egoism and Altruism. Bentham, as an advocate of the latter, adds another criterion or mark, *viz., extent—i. e.,*—the number of persons who will be affected. We should be very careful to calculate the interests of the number of persons affected by an act. The interest of the community, he says, is the supreme end in morals. Thus, according to him, the lines of action that should be pursued or avoided by us are indicated

by these dimensions taken together. His advice to us is, "Weigh pleasures, weigh pains, and as the balance stands, will stand the question of right and wrong." We should choose between different actions by calculating, according to these criteria, the amount of agreeable experience or pleasure they will probably give. "The wise man will choose his ends and regulate his actions so as to realise the greatest quantity of pleasure possible, and the good man will take care that the pleasure realised is not his own alone, but includes that of others."

Bentham's Utilitarianism may be called *gross or sensualistic,* because, as pointed out above, he does not admit qualitative differences among pleasures, but says on the contrary that any one pleasure is as good as another, provided they are equal in quantity. It should be borne in mind that by 'purity' he does not mean any superior quality. A pleasure or pain is called 'pure' by Bentham when it is unalloyed or unmixed with its opposite.

Another characteristic of Bentham's philosophy is that it involves the doctrine of Psychological Hedonism. Though Bentham is an altruist and says that we should seek the happiness of others, yet he distinctly states that we naturally seek our own happiness. Thus he says, "Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do as well as what we shall do." (Principles of Morals and Legislation, pp. 1-2). Again, "To obtain the greatest portion of happiness for himself is the object of every rational being. Every man is nearer to himself than he can be to any other man ; and no other man can weigh for him his pleasures and pains. Himself must necessarily be his own first concern. His interest must, to himself, be the primary interest." (Deontology, I, pp. 17, 18). That man is naturally egoistic is again and again asserted by Bentham

and most emphatically in the following passage: "Dream not that men will move their little finger to serve you, unless their own advantage in so doing be obvious to them. Men never did so, and never will, while human nature is made of the present materials. But they will desire to serve you, when by so doing they can serve themselves; and the occasions on which they can serve themselves by serving you are multitudinous." (Deontology, II, p. 133).

II. *J. S. Mill's theory* (*Refined Utilitarianism*). Mill also is an altruist, and he says very explicitly that the standard is not the agent's own happiness, but happiness in general. He declares that "the happiness which forms the utilitarian standard of what is right in conduct, is not the agent's own happiness, but that of all concerned. In the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth, we read the complete spirit of the ethics of utility. To do as one would be done by, and to love one's neighbour as oneself, constitute the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality." (Utilitarianism, Ch. II, pp. 24, 25). In answer to the question what he means by happiness, he says that "by happiness is intended pleasure and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain and the privation of pleasure." (*Ibid.*, p. 10).

But another question arises here: How can we prove that general happiness is desirable? Mill answers, "No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness. This, however, being a fact, we have not only all the proof which the case admits of, but all which it is possible to require, that happiness is a good, that each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness, therefore, a good to the aggregate of all persons. Happiness has made out its title as one of the ends of conduct and consequently one of the criteria of morality."

But another important question is to be answered by the Altruistic Hedonists: "Why am I *bound* to promote the general happiness? If my own happiness lies in something else, why may I not give that the preference?" Mill answers that there are several persuasives to altruistic conduct (called the sanctions of morality). There are, he says, two kinds of sanction for altruistic conduct—external and internal. The external sanctions (which are recognised by Bentham as well as Mill) are four in number: physical or natural, political or legal, social or popular, and religious or divine. But an appeal to external sanctions means ultimately an appeal to the self-interest of the individual. As Seth remarks, "The individual whose life was governed by such constraints would still be, in character and motive, if not in outward act, an egoist; his end would still be egoistic, though it was accomplished by altruistic means." Mill is aware of this, and he adds accordingly an internal sanction which is "a feeling for the happiness of mankind," "a feeling of regard to the pleasures and pains of others," "the social feelings of mankind, the desire to be in unity with our fellow-creatures." *

Mill's *Gradation of pleasures.* The most important point in Mill's ethical system is his doctrine of a gradation of pleasures in respect of quality. It is Mill's chief innova-

* For a full account and criticism of Mill's theory of moral sanctions, see Chapters XVI and XVIII of this book. The word *Sanction* means anything that makes a course of action binding. By *physical* sanctions we mean the pleasures and pains (diseases &c.), brought on by the course of nature. By the *political* or *legal* sanctions we mean the penalties attached by the State to the infringement of its laws. By the *social* or *popular* sanctions we mean the pleasures and pains derived from public opinion. By *religious* sanctions we mean such pleasures and pains of this world and the next as are attached to actions by the will of God.

tion that he introduces a distinction of *quality* in addition to the distinction of *quantity*. As has been said before, Mill holds, in opposition to Bentham, that pleasures differ in *quality* as well as in *quantity*, and that in estimating happiness, we should take into account differences of quality and quantity. In other words, according to Mill, there are different *kinds* of pleasure, and "some kinds are more desirable and valuable than others." This is equivalent to saying that a pleasure equal or inferior to another in respect of quantity may nevertheless be superior in respect of quality, and a truly wise man will choose pleasures of higher qualities or kinds and reject the lower pleasures. Worth and dignity of pleasure must be looked upon as better than quantity.

In short, according to Mill, a pleasure may possess "a superiority in quality so far outweighing quantity as to render it, in comparison, of small account." Thus the highest good is conceived by him as lying, not in intense or durable enjoyment, but in the enjoyment of *noble, elevated* and *dignified* pleasures, even though these be of small intensity or short duration. "The ultimate end, with reference to and for the sake of which all other things are desirable (whether we are considering our own good or that of other people), is an existence exempt as far as possible from pain, and as rich as possible in enjoyment, *both in point of quantity and quality.*"

It is in this way that Mill tries to show that the charge, brought against Hedonism, of having a degrading and sensualistic tendency, is groundless. Older Hedonists, holding that the value of pleasure is measurable by quantity alone, seemed to place on the same level the pleasure of a debauchee and that of a hero or a sage, the joy of an Archimedes and the drunken revelry of a sensualist, the happiness of a John Howard and that of a miser. Nay, they seemed to give most

value to pleasures of the lower senses, as being the most intense in degree. But Mill holds that "it is quite compatible with the principle of utility to recognise the fact that some *kinds* of pleasure are more desirable and valuable than others. It would be absurd that while, in estimating all other things, quality is considered as well as quantity, the estimation of pleasure should depend on quantity alone." (Utilitarianism, Ch. II).

What, then, is the test of quality and the rule of measuring it against quantity ? Mill says that it is "the preference felt by those who, in their opportunities of experience, to which must be added their habits of self-consciousness and self-observation, are best furnished with the means of comparison." He thus appeals to 'the verdict of competent judges.' When Mill is pressed to assign the ultimate ground of the preference felt by the competent judges, he refers us to 'the sense of dignity' which is natural to man. It is on account of the existence of this sense of dignity in man that he "would not consent to be changed into any of the lower animals for a promise of the fullest allowance of a beast's pleasures. No intelligent human being would consent to be a fool, no instructed person would be an ignoramus, no person of feeling and conscience would be selfish and base, even though they should be persuaded that the fool, the dunce or the rascal is better satisfied with his lot than they are with theirs." (*Ibid.*, p. 12). He again says, "It is better to be a Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied ; better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied. And if the fool or the pig is of a different opinion, it is because they only know their own side of the question. The other party to the comparison knows both sides." (*Ibid.*, p. 14).

It is in the above ways that J. S. Mill endeavours to strengthen the system of Hedonistic Ethics. The additions and modifications by means of which he tries to purify or

refine Hedonism are three, as shown above; *viz.*, (i) his substitution of *general happiness* for the happiness of the *individual*, as the end of life and standard of rectitude; (ii) his doctrine of *gradation* of pleasures, in respect of *quality*; (iii) his view that the true sanction of morality is *internal*, and *not external*. He tries in these ways to free the Hedonistic doctrine from the charges of egoism and sensualism. It should be borne in mind that his introduction of a distinction of *quality* or of *higher* and *lower* among pleasures is the main ground of difference between himself and his predecessors like Bentham.

§ 7. Critical estimate of Altruistic Hedonism or Utilitarianism.

(*a*) Hedonism or Utilitarianism, as explained by Hume, Bentham, Mill and Bain, claims to be an altruistic theory. But a little reflection is sufficient to show that Hedonism, consistently carried out, must necessarily become egoistic or individualistic, and not altruistic or universalistic, as supposed by these writers. Why should any person sacrifice his own pleasure for the sake of the pleasure of others? How can the Hedonists prove the desirability of 'general happiness'? Since Hedonism has generally been allowed to rest on the psychological postulate that an individual is bound, by his very nature, to seek only his own pleasure, the burden of proof lies heavy on the Hedonist. It will be seen that "a consistent Hedonist may be led to promote the good of others, either when he believes that it is but a means to his own or when he labours under a delusion." Strictly speaking, then, his conduct cannot be called 'disinterested' or benevolent.

Indeed, as Martineau points out, no transition is possible from egoism to altruism. "From 'each for himself' to 'each for all'—no road."

But let us examine fully the arguments of the Hedonists themselves. Let us see whether they can establish the

desirability of general happiness and supply a sufficient ground of obligation or duty.

(i) Mill's argument for proving that general happiness is desirable is fallacious. He says : "Each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness, therefore, is a good to the aggregate of all persons." This is as much as to say : "Happiness is a good. My happiness is a good to me, yours to you, his to him, &c. Therefore my happiness + your happiness + his happiness + &c. are a good to me + you + him + &c., *i.e.*, the general happiness is a good to the aggregate of all persons. Again, because general happiness is a good to, or an end for, the aggregate of all persons, therefore it is an end for each person." Or, to express the argument in a different way : "since A desires the happiness of A, and B that of B, A and B both desire the happiness of A and B, and therefore A and B as individuals desire the happiness of both A and B." It is easy to see that the argument involves two fallacies, first a fallacy of Composition, and then one of Division. It is surprising that Mill, who was a great Logician and the author of a standard text-book on Logic, committed a logical fallacy which could be detected at a glance even by an ordinary student of the subject. We may as well argue that, because every person desires to have a quantity of food for himself, therefore he desires also to supply the food of others or all. As Prof. Muirhead observes, "This is as though one were to argue (to borrow Carlyle's famous comparison), that because each pig desires for himself the greatest amount of a limited quantity of pigs' wash, each necessarily desires the greatest quantity for every other or for all." We see, then, that from the fact that each one desires his own happiness, it does not logically follow that each one should try to make others or all happy.

(ii) In fact, Utilitarianism utterly fails to supply us with a sufficient ground of moral obligation. All its attempts to

explain adequately the sense of obligation are failures. Why are we *bound* to promote general happiness? Why should we feel it to be our *duty* to act for the general good and to refrain from unjust, cruel and selfish actions? What sufficient motive have we for sacrificing our own pleasure to that of others, seeing that it is natural for us to seek our own pleasure? We know that the Utilitarians try to reconcile Egoism and Altruism and to account for obligation by an appeal to the sanctions of morality—external and internal. Now, with regard to the external sanctions—physical, political, social and religious or Divine, it may be said that an appeal to these really amounts to substituting self-interest for morality, prudence for virtue, and thus falling back into Egoism. Mill accordingly adds the internal sanction of moral sentiment which, he says, is a safeguard against wrong-doing and an impulse towards what is right or conducive to the general good. But this, too, implies prudence, and not virtue, which is disinterested in character. A man who refrains from wrong-doing to avoid the sufferings connected with his moral nature or performs a good act for the sake of the feeling of satisfaction it will yield is really guided by prudential consideration.*

Utilitarians suppose that the force of *sympathy* or *fellow-feeling* is one of the grounds of obligation (See Ch. IX & XVI). They hold that a capacity of sympathy, fellow-feeling or social feeling is developed in the life-time of every individual and enables him to feel more or less the pleasures and pains of others and to identify them with his own so as to make pleasure in general (and not his

* See Chapter XVIII. See also Muirhead, Elements of Ethics, pp. 103-104: "Conduct which issues from regard for these sanctions is *not* morality.........The man who is temperate because he desires the pleasures of temperance is, as Plato pointed out, temperate by reason of a kind of intemperance. Similarly, the man who is courageous from fear of the pains which will be the consequence of cowardice is courageous by reason of a kind of cowardice."

own solely) his ultimate end of life ; and not only so, but it also gives him a conviction that it is his duty or that he is under an obligation to do so. But such sympathy for the pleasures and pains of others may often be outweighed by one's own pleasures and pains. "If a person's actions were always determined by the strongest pleasure, it is doubtful if the feeling of the pleasure and pain of others would ever be strong enough to make him sacrifice his own pleasure to that of others. At least, it would not lead him to make any important sacrifice—it would not make a martyr or a hero of him. It would not give the soldier such a feeling of duty as makes him risk his life for the greater happiness of his countrymen, nor even deter the cashier from defrauding his employers ; nor the servant from petty thefts which might cause little loss or pain to his master."* (Prof. H. Stephen.)

The Utilitarians, as we have seen before, contend that virtuous or altruistic tendencies are produced in us according to the principle of transference of interest, so that we find greater satisfaction in being virtuous than in being the reverse (see Ch. IX, p. 129). But there is this objection : even supposing that such tendencies are produced in this way and obeyed automatically for a time, yet when men come to understand how these tendencies are produced, they will look upon them as illusions and cease to be actuated by them. In fact, "when men are told that the end of these virtuous tendencies is the promotion of happiness, and find that in some cases happiness may be obtained by

* That the Utilitarian principle is unable to supply a sufficient bond of obligation is evident from the following example. A servant who is in the employment of a millionaire finds that, by stealing a certain amount of money, he can make himself happy, and that, to his master, who is a millionaire, the amount is nothing. Is he justified in stealing ? Perhaps the Hedonist will say, No ; it will be setting a bad example to others. But what if the man knows with certainty that he can steal without being detected ?

the violation of them, then these altruistic impulses will lose all their binding force upon the mind. In short, feeling thus developed out of egoism can never be truly altruistic, but ego-altruistic at most."

We conclude, then, that the Utilitarians are unable to reconcile egoism with altruism. A consistent Hedonist will never be a hero, a martyr or a philanthropist. If he is ever so, we must suppose that his act is based on illusion—either that he expects to obtain greater happiness by his momentary self-sacrifice, or that in sacrificing himself for others, he is so far carried away by the passion of the moment as to forget his prudence and yield himself to a blind impulse.

(*b*) Further, Hedonism does not supply us with a sufficient *standard* of moral conduct-or means of distinguishing right and wrong. Altruistic Hedonism judges the rightness and wrongness of actions by their bearing on the pleasures and pains of others. But there are many forms of wrong actions which inflict no appreciable pain on others. Are they to be called innocent? In many cases fraud and dishonesty may be conducive to the pleasure of some, without causing any considerable pain to others. In many cases injury and injustice to one person may be made the means of pleasure to many others. How are we to condemn such actions on the strictly utilitarian principle? Of course, Hedonists like Bentham and Mill would strongly condemn such acts, but that is because they unconsciously borrowed their conception of equity or justice from the Intuitionist and Idealist schools. They thus tacitly assumed a standard higher than pleasure. A strict following of the Hedonistic rule, uncorrected by a higher one, would lead to moral anarchy.

(*c*) We have seen before that Mill endeavours to save Hedonism from the charge of sensualism by his theory of the *qualitative* differences among pleasures. According to him,

pleasures that are the highest in quality are to be chosen to the rejection of the lower ones. But Mill forgets that he is here appealing to a standard other than pleasure. The value of a pleasure as such consists in its pleasurableness, *i.e.*, the amount of agreeable feeling it gives. If we once grant that pleasure as such is the highest good in itself, we are bound logically to grant something more, *viz.*, that the only measure of the value of pleasures is the *quantity* or *amount* of the agreeable consciousness yielded thereby. Mill's distinction, therefore, though it purifies Hedonism, does so at the cost of the consistency of the Hedonistic position. Suppose A and B are two pleasures. They are equal in quantity—*i. e.*, in the amount of agreeable experience they give. Mill advises us to choose B on the ground of its superiority in respect of *quality*. But what is this mysterious quality on account of which one pleasure is superior to another equal to or greater than it in respect of quantity? Is not this differentiating quality an *extra hedonistic* quality? If the superiority of one pleasure over another does not consist in its pleasurableness,—*i. e.*, the amount of pleasure, then it consists in *something other than pleasure.* Mill's view practically implies an abandonment of the Hedonistic position and subordinating the Hedonistic standard to a higher standard of value which is not pleasure. It implies that "we may seek pleasure or happiness, but in ways subject to a standard which is not itself pleasure or happiness"—we may gratify those desires which are approved by our higher or moral nature. But this is also the view of Perfectionism.

Mill appeals to "the verdict of competent judges" when explaining the test of quality. But the verdict, to have any value, must be rational, and not arbitrary. It must be based on some ultimate criterion, and this, as suggested by Mill himself, is nothing but the sense of dignity natural to man.

Thus the ultimate court of appeal is not the arbitrary verdict of the judges, but something else on which the verdict is based—the consciousness of the dignity of man as man. But this is passing over to Perfectionism. As Seth says, "The sense of dignity cannot be resolved into desire of pleasure...It is the utterance of the rational self behind the self of sensibility. Not the attainment of pleasure as such, but the finding of our pleasure in activities which are worthy of this higher and rational nature - such is the end set before us by our peculiar sense of dignity."

(*d*) The Hedonistic calculus is impossible. We have seen before that Hedonistic calculation is extremely difficult in the case of an individual. If so, the difficulty must be still greater when we are to calculate "the greatest happiness of the greatest number". Bentham himself declares, "Every man is nearer to himself than he can be to any other man, and no other man can weigh for him his pleasures and pains. Himself must necessarily be his own first concern." If so, how can we expect an accurate and impartial estimate of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" ? Then, again, we know that, as regards susceptibility to feelings, men differ widely from each other. What is pleasurable to one may not be so to another. Further, our tastes and inclinations are variable—the very same thing which makes us happy at one time may fail to please us at another time. In the face of these facts, how can we say that Hedonistic calculation is practicable ? And the difficulty of Hedonistic calculation has been immensely increased by Mill's theory of qualitative differences among pleasures. We know that pleasures differ so much from each other as to be practically incommensurable ; and this incommensurability is especially obvious when we have regard to quality as well as to quantity.

From what has been said above it is clear that Utilitarianism cannot provide us with an adequate theory of morality.

CHAPTER XII.

ETHICAL STANDARD.

THE STANDARD ACCORDING TO EVOLUTIONISTS.

(Evolutional Hedonism or Utilitarianism).

§ 1. Application of evolution to morals.

Although the idea of evolution was often applied to moral life in former ages, yet it is only in recent times that the conception has been given a prominent place. Many thinkers suppose now-a-days that morality, like Nature, has evolved ; and neither can be understood except in the light of its evolution. The conception of evolution was brought into prominence by Hegel and Comte ; it was applied by Laplace to the origin of the solar system ; by Lamarck, Darwin and others to the origin of living species, but it is Spencer and his followers who have extended its application to all departments of natural phenomena. They have applied it to the origin of the solar and stellar systems, origin of life and living species, origin of mind, of social and moral institutions, forms of government &c.

We are concerned in Ethics with the application of evolution to morals ; and in the present chapter we shall confine ourselves to the exposition and criticism of the Evolutionary Ethics of H. Spencer, Leslie Stephen, Alexander and others.

But before we proceed to explain the moral theory of Spencer and others, it is necessary to point out that there are two possible ways of interpreting moral life, if we adopt the theory of evolution or development. *We may explain it by reference to its beginning or to its end.* This will be clear from the following considerations. In all development, there must be a beginning, a process and an end. In other words,

the developing thing starts from a certain point, passes through successive stages of higher and higher complexity, and thus moves onwards towards a certain goal. But generally what is actually perceived by us is neither the beginning nor the end, but the process. Let us take the example of the evolution of the animal species. Here the starting point and the goal are practically concealed from us: we see only the race. Here we do not know the absolute beginning of the species—the lowest animal form; nor are we able to know the goal—the highest form of animal life. It is only the intermediate forms of life that we actually know. So it is also with moral life. The earliest or the lowest form of moral life is not known to us—it is hidden in obscurity; nor can we form a clear conception of a perfectly developed moral life. We know the moral life only in the course of its development. In other words, the process or the intermediate stages of moral life can be alone clearly known to us. Nevertheless, we can explain this process only by reference either to its beginning or to its end or goal.

We see, then, that if we adopt the theory of development, we may interpret the moral life in two ways—(i) by reference to its beginning or origin, and (ii) by reference to its end, goal or ideal. The former method has been adopted by Spencer and his followers; the latter, by Green and his followers.

Which of these two methods is the right one? The former method appears at first sight to be the more natural method, for sciences seek to explain natural phenomena by reference to their origins or causes and the modes of their operation. Hence it may be said that, if Ethics is a science, it must explain moral life by tracing it back to its origin—*e. g.*, the needs of savages or even the struggles of lower animals. Yet a closer reflection shows that this method of

the natural sciences is not the appropriate method for Ethics which, as we have seen before, occupies quite a different point of view from that of the natural sciences. It is concerned, not so much with the origin or the history of moral life, as with the ideal of morality, and the ideal lies at the end rather than at the beginning. Hence the latter method is the more appropriate one. Evolutionists like Spencer, Leslie Stephen and others give us, as Green points out, only a "natural science of morals." (*Vide* § 3 of this chapter).

§ 2. General Explanation of Evolutional Hedonism.

As has been said above, the theory has been propounded by H. Spencer, Leslie Stephen, Prof. Alexander and others. In the present section we shall explain the theory in a general way ; and in doing this, we shall refer indifferently to the views of its leading supporters—Spencer, Stephen and Alexander—although they differ in certain important points. The points of difference will be explained in the Notes at the end of this chapter.

According to Evolutionists, an adequate explanation of the facts of our moral life must involve a reference to ancestral experience. Evolutionary Ethics accordingly traces the present mental and moral constitution of man to the history of his ancestors and ultimately to that interaction between organism and environment which underlies the evolution of every form of life. Consistently with this view, moral evolution is but a form of the general course of evolution, and Ethics is but a section of Biology, or, rather, of Cosmology. Conscience and social feeling must be looked upon as the necessary product of adaptation to circumstances, struggle for existence and natural selection.*

* "To understand fully human conduct as a whole," observes Spencer, "we must study it as a part of that larger whole constituted by the conduct of animate beings in general." (Data of Ethics, p. 7).

Thus, according to Evolutionists, we are made to be what we are by inheriting the accumulated results of all the experiences and acquisitions of all our ancestors. The human race has grown just as the individual grows; and our physical and mental powers have been acquired by gradual differentiations and integrations extending through the lives of our ancestors since the beginning of life, accumulating from generation to generation, and transmitted by inheritance. Among the tendencies that we have inherited, we have inherited our altruistic, sympathetic, social instincts.

It is in this way that the theory of evolution tries to reconcile the *a priori* and *a posteriori* systems of Philosophy. It tries to show that what is *a priori* is, at the same time, of experiential origin—it is the result of the collective experience of the race. The altruistic tendencies are innate and instinctive in *us*, but they are really the products of the accumulated experiences of all our ancestors. They have

Moral conduct is "that form which universal conduct assumes during the last stages of its evolution." The theory makes the preservation and development of life to be the universal end of conduct. The grand end of conduct is the preservation of the self and the race. Hence the theory is often called "the theory of Biological perfection as standard." It takes organic perfection as the goal of our moral life.

Nevertheless, the theory is only a form of Hedonism. Spencer, for instance, says that "sentient existence can evolve only on condition that pleasure-giving acts are life-sustaining acts." (Data of Ethics, p. 83). Again, he says, "The justification for whatever increases life is the reception from life of more happiness than misery. It follows that conduciveness to happiness is the ultimate test of perfection in a man's nature." (*Ibid.*, p. 34). Similarly, Leslie Stephen observes, "What is pleasant is approximately wholesome." "The evolutionist and the utilitarian criteria are not divergent; on the contrary, they necessarily tend to coincide." (Science of Ethics, p. 352). "The 'useful' in the sense of 'pleasure-giving' must approximately coincide with 'useful' in the sense of 'life-preserving'."

been acquired through the continuous experiences of our ancestors, accumulated since the beginning of the race, and transmitted to us as inherited instincts, according to the law of heredity. "What is habit in the father tends to become nature in the child." The fundamental moral principles, though ultimately resting on experiences of utility, have become intuitive in us owing to the influence of heredity.*

One of the peculiar features of Evolutional Hedonism is that it admits the organic nature of society.† Individuals are the organs of the larger organism called society, and it is by contributing to the common life and perfection of society or the whole collective organism that they can promote their own life and perfection. "It is by mutual interaction and co-operation as organs of an organism or members of society, from the very beginning, that men have come to be what they are physically, mentally and socially; and it is as organs of a social organism that they live, move and have their being. The social feelings and tendencies, which make the unity and common life of the social organism possible, have developed along with the social organism and have become engrained in the physical and mental constitutions of individuals, and have been transmitted by inheritance,

* "Though the *moral intuitions* are the results of accumulated experiences of utility gradually organized and inherited, they have come to be quite independent of conscious experience...Experiences of utility, organised and consolidated through all past generations of the human race, have been producing corresponding nervous modifications, which, by continued transmission and accumulation, have become in us certain faculties of moral intuition—certain emotions responding to right and wrong conduct, which have no apparent basis in the individual experiences of utility." (Spencer's Letter to Mill).

† The theory that society is an organism, and not a mere aggregate of individuals, has been worked out most fully by Leslie Stephen in his 'Science of Ethics'. Prof. Alexander also entertains the same view. Spencer's theory seems to be more individualistic.

to be identical with that of others and of society as a whole, and to be attainable only by his fulfiling his function as a member of the whole ; and in which law will become superfluous and obligation meaningless." In other words, there will be in the long run a perfect conciliation of the interests of the individual with those of society, and every individual will then do from pure love and with delight what now requires the coercive influence of society in order that it may be done.

What, then, is the business of Ethics ? Is ethical discussion of right and wrong at all necessary ? If so, what is the right method of ethical enquiry ?

We have seen before that social evolution has provided men with hereditary altruistic feelings and tendencies, so that hedonistic calculation is generally unnecessary. Still, in the existing state of things, such hereditary feelings and impulses require to be supplemented by ethical thought ; but the true method of ethical enquiry is not the calculation of individual interests, but deduction of moral principles from the laws and conditions of life and collective prosperity. In other words, the right method of ethical enquiry is to deduce moral principles from biological and sociological laws. "I conceive it to be the business of Moral Science," observes Spencer, "to deduce from the laws of life and the conditions of existence what kinds of action necessarily tend to produce happiness, and what kinds to produce unhappiness. Having done this, its deductions are to be recognised as laws of conduct ; and are to be conformed to irrespective of a direct estimation of happiness or misery." (Letter to Mill). We see, then, that the method of Evolutional Hedonism is *deductive*, while that of older Utilitarianism or Hedonism is *inductive*. From the utilitarian standpoint, moral laws are mere empirical generalisations ; from the evolutionist standpoint, they are derivative laws following from biological and sociological conditions.

Summary. From what has been said above, it is clear that, according to Evolutional Hedonism,

(i) Morality has evolved in time and the evolution of morality is part and parcel of the general evolution of nature ;

(ii) Society has an organic nature and necessarily grows as an organism grows ; and thus the connection between the individual and society is not external and mechanical, but internal and organic ;

(iii) Individuals being the organs of the larger organism called society, they can contribute to their own perfection only by contributing to the life and perfection of society ;

(iv) Pleasure or happiness is the ultimate end ; but the direct practical object of pursuit is the health and development of the social organism—which is the condition of the happiness of its members. "The end is happiness, but that is best obtained by keeping it in the background and fixing attention upon the conditions" ;

(v) The disinterested social feelings have been developed by the successive experiences of ages, as the necessary condition of the growth of the social organism ; and have been registered in the structure of the physical organism and brain and handed down with it by inheritance, so that they are now hereditary, innate and instinctive in every individual ;

(vi) The business of Ethics is to deduce moral principles from biological and sociological laws ;

(vii) Thus the true method is *deductive*, and *not inductive* ;

(viii) And the moral laws are not mere inductive generalisations from the experiences of pleasure and pain, but are derivative principles deducible from biological and sociological laws. The fundamental moral principles, though

originally derivative, have become intuitive in us owing to the influence of heredity.

§ 3. **Critical estimate of Evolutional Hedonism.**

(i) The theory of Evolutional Hedonism claims to be an improvement upon the older Hedonistic or Utilitarian system of Bentham, Mill and others. But "if the older system attached too much importance to deliberate calculation in the judgment of actions, it is obvious that Evolutional Hedonism tends to exaggerate the part played by blind instinct, and to reduce will to a mechanism of impulses." It has moreover some of the glaring defects of older Utilitarianism, *e.g.*, it fails to supply an adequate criterion of moral conduct and a sufficient ground of obligation. (See Appendix B).

(ii) Evolutionary Hedonism really abandons the proper end and standard of consistent Hedonism and adopts that of Perfectionism or Eudæmonism when it confesses that we cannot obtain happiness by directly aiming at it, and that in order to promote the greatest possible happiness, we must aim at the health and development of society as an organism.

(iii) The theory of evolution as accepted by modern Biology is, in truth, inconsistent with "the pleasure theory." The conclusions of that science, instead of supporting the main contention of Hedonism that pleasure is the only thing desired, rather controvert it. As Prof. Muirhead points out, "The results of Biology show that impulse and desire precede the feeling of pleasure, and not *vice versa.* Pleasure, indeed, follows upon successful effort : it is the sign of it ; but the impulse or desire to exercise the function precedes and conditions the pleasure, not *vice versa.* In human life the object gives us pleasure, in the first place, because we desire it ; we do not desire it because it gives us pleasure.* We may, of course, make the pleasure our object.

* See the criticism of Psychological Hedonism in Ch. XI, § 8.

We may use the organs (*e. g.*, of taste and digestion) in order to enjoy the pleasure of the exercise of their functions. But this is unnatural, and, in the strict sense of the term, 'preposterous'. Nature herself protests against it by impairing and, if we persist, by destroying the organs, perhaps ourselves along with them." (Elements of Ethics.)

(iv) It is going too far to suppose that biological evolution explains mental and moral evolution. Even if we admit physical or biological evolution, mental or moral evolution as a *consequent* process is not proved. The supporters of the mechanical or naturalistic theory of evolution err in holding that the rational and moral nature of man has been evolved out of non-rational and non-moral elements. Evolution cannot create anything new—it can only gradually unfold or manifest what was latent or implicit before. It cannot, therefore, derive the moral out of the non-moral—it cannot call into being a moral nature where there was none before. Thus the theory cannot show that conscience has arisen out of sentient nature.* (See Ch. XXIV, p. 261).

(v) Indeed, biological and moral evolutions are essentially distinct, being governed by different principles and tendencies. In the former case we find the victory of the strongest under definite circumstances ; in the latter we find the ascendency of the morally best. In the former,

* We accordingly find Dr. Wallace, an advocate of biological evolution, denying that biological evolution controls intellectual, moral and spiritual evolution, for higher faculties develop under a higher law.

For a general criticism of the theory of Mechanical Evolution, see Outlines of General Philosophy, Ch. III, X, XI and XV. We may here simply remark that the theory of evolution goes too far when it assumes that human nature in its entirety has been moulded by circumstances. The theory of Mechanical Evolution is unable to explain the origin and end of things and to bridge over the gap between (i) matter and life, (ii) that between life and mind, and (iii) that between animal mind and rational mind,

we find a tendency on the part of the strong to scorn and destroy the weak; in the latter, we find a growing sympathy for the weak, an ardent desire to help and protect them, an anxiety to improve their condition and to make them 'fit for existence.' If biological evolution is marked by a violent strife or struggle for existence, a keen competition and a ruthless self-assertion, moral evolution gradually leads on to fellow-feeling, co-operation, self-restraint and occasionally self-sacrifice. The biological principle of the survival of the fittest or the strongest has no place in the moral world, unless by the strongest is understood, not he that lives for himself alone, but he that protects the weak, is kind as well as brave, full of resources that are spent in active beneficence. "The Darwinian theory," says Hutton, "is quite incapable of explaining the specifically human phenomenon of what may be called an anti-Darwinian conscience *which restrains and subordinates the principle of competition.*" This is so very manifest that even Huxley, one of the most distinguished evolutionists, has to admit it. He says, "The practice of that which is ethically best—what we call goodness or virtue--involves a course of conduct which, in all respects, is opposed to that which leads to success in the cosmic struggle for existence. In place of ruthless self-assertion, it demands self-restraint; in place of treading down all competitors, it requires that the individual shall not merely respect, but shall help his fellows; its influence is directed, not so much to the survival of the fittest, as to the fitting of as many as possible to survive. It repudiates the gladiatorial theory of existence." (Evolution and Ethics, pp. 81-82).

(vi) Whether the theory of Evolution is successful or not in explaining the growth of our moral life, it is unable to explain adequately the character of the moral ideal. Ethics is a normative science; its primary task is to determine the moral ideal or standard, and not merely to discover and

describe the stages of development through which man has actually passed. Evolutionists answer questions of natural history instead of questions of Ethics, for their theory is essentially a natural history of the growth of the moral life. What they say may throw considerable light on the way in which the moral life has developed, but does not answer the question—*Why* are we to choose that life? In the words of Prof. Mackenzie, "We wish to know the *ground of preference* of one kind of conduct over another; and it is no solution of this problem to say that one kind has succeeded in driving out the other." This point has been very well explained by Prof. Sorley in his *Ethics of Naturalism*, p. 146 : "We may naturally expect the theory of evolution to throw light on such questions as the growth of moral feelings and ideas, and of the customs and institutions in which morality is expressed and embodied. But to show the process morality has passed through in the individual mind and in society still leaves unanswered the questions as to the moral ideal and the distinction between good and evil in conduct. It is necessary, therefore, to keep clearly before us the difference between the historical and the ethical problem."*

* Cf. Prof. Huxley's *Romanes Lectures* : "The propounders of what are called the ethics of evolution...adduce a number of more or less interesting facts and more or less sound arguments, in favour of the origin of the moral sentiment, in the same way as other natural phenomena, by a process of evolution. * * * Cosmic evolution may teach us how the good and the evil tendencies of men may have come about ; but, in itself, it is incompetent to furnish any better reason why what we call good is preferable to what we call evil than we had before."

See also Kulpe's *Introduction to Philosophy*, p. 214 : "A normative discipline, an art of volition and action, can gain nothing either for the validity or for the systematisation of its forms and precepts from the proof of their gradual development under a variety of conditions and influences. We can no more hope that Ethics will be assisted in any direct way by an account of the course of moral ideas through the centuries than that Logic would be helped to solve its problems by a psychological history of the development of its concepts and judgments and methods."

NOTE ON EVOLUTIONARY HEDONISM.

An attempt has been made in § 2 of this chapter to give a general account of Evolutionary Hedonism. It has been remarked there that Spencer, Leslie Stephen and Alexander—the three leading supporters of this view—differ in certain important respects. A brief account of the ethical view of each is given below. The points of difference are also indicated.

(a) H. Spencer's view.

As has been pointed out before, Spencer explains moral life by reference to its beginning or origin. He goes back to the life of lower animals to determine the beginning of moral life. Moral conduct, according to him, is but a form of conduct in general—it is the form which universal conduct assumes during the last stages of its evolution. Life consists essentially in the "continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations"—*i. e.*—in the constant effort of an organism to adapt itself to its environment. In so far as conduct tends to promote such adaptation or adjustment, it is good ; in so far as it tends to hinder it, it is bad. Good conduct brings pleasure, because it brings the organism into harmony with its environment ; bad conduct produces pain, because it hinders such adaptation or adjustment. That conduct is relatively good which tends on the whole to produce a surplus of pleasure over pain—*i. e.*—which tends on the whole to produce a more perfect adjustment or adaptation to environment. In short, 'good' implies 'due adjustment', and 'evil' implies 'mal-adjustment' or 'non-adaptation'. In human society evil has a tendency to disappear, for civilisation tends to bring about a perfect harmony between human nature and its social environment. Man is still in the process of adaptation. Virtue in the highest form implies the state of perfect adjustment of the individual to the society. A time will come when, owing to the perfect adjustment of the inner to the outer conditions of our existence, there will be complete happiness and finished virtue.

What, then, is the goal of evolution according to Spencer? "Evolution," remarks Spencer, "tending ever towards self-preservation, reaches its limit when individual life is the greatest, both in length and breadth; and we regard as good the conduct furthering self-preservation, and as bad the conduct tending to self-destruction.........Evolution becomes the highest possible when the conduct simultaneously achieves the greatest totality of life in self, in offspring and in fellow-men." (Data of Ethics, pp. 25, 26). Thus, according to him, the limit of evolution is the greatest longevity and complexity of life. The universal end of conduct is life—its preservation and development. Good conduct is that which subserves life, and bad conduct, which destroys or hinders it.

Spencer's Evolutionary Ethics is essentially Hedonistic.* He observes that "in calling good the conduct which subserves life, and bad the conduct which hinders or destroys it, and in so implying that life is a blessing and not a curse, we are inevitably asserting that conduct is good or bad according as its total effects are pleasurable or painful." Elsewhere he remarks, "No school can avoid taking for the ultimate aim a desirable state of feeling, called by whatever name, gratification, enjoyment, happiness. Pleasure somewhere, at some time, to some being or beings, is an inexpugnable element in the conception." (Data of Ethics). "If we call good the conduct conducive to life, we can do so only with the implication that it is conducive to a surplus of pleasures over pain." (*Ibid.*, p. 45).

Spencer thinks that, with the moralisation of the race, obligation will diminish. He remarks that "the sense of duty or moral obligation is transitory and will diminish as fast as moralisation increases....While at first the motive contains an element of coercion, at last this element of coercion dies out and the act is performed without any consciousness of being obliged to perform it." Since the consciousness of obligation arises from the incomplete adaptation of the individual to the social conditions of his life, "with complete adaptation to the social state, that

* See the foot-note in page 174 of this book.

element in the moral consciousness which is expressed by the word 'obligation' will disappear."

In fact, the conflict between the interests of society and those of the individual, which is the source of the consciousness of obligation, is not absolute and permanent. "A conciliation has been, and is, taking place between the interests of each citizen and the interests of citizens at large, tending ever towards a state in which the two become merged in one, and in which the feelings answering to them respectively fall into complete concord." Thus, "altruism of a social kind...may be expected to attain a level at which it will be like parental altruism in spontaneity—a level such that ministration to others' happiness will become a daily need." "The development of *sympathy*, which must advance as fast as conditions permit, will bring about this state." In this way, ultimately, with the development of sympathy in the highest degree, "there will disappear that apparently permanent opposition between egoism and altruism, implied by the compromise. ...Subjectively looked at, the conciliation will be such that the individual will not have to balance between self-regarding impulses and other-regarding impulses, but, instead, those satisfactions of other-regarding impulses which involve self-sacrifice, becoming rare and much prized, will be so unhesitatingly preferred that the competition of self-regarding impulses with them will then be scarcely left...Meanwhile, the conciliation objectively considered will be equally complete. Though each, no longer needing to maintain his egoistic claims, will tend rather, when occasion offers, to surrender them, yet others, similarly natured, will not permit him in any large measure to do this, and that fulfilment of personal desires required for competition of his life will thus be secured to him; though not now egoistic in the ordinary sense, yet the effects of due egoism will be achieved. *** Far off as seems such a state, yet every one of the factors counted on to produce it may already be traced in operation among those of highest natures. What now in them is occasional and feeble, may be expected with further evolution to become habitual and strong; and what now characterises the exceptionally high may be expected

eventually to characterise them all. For that which the best human nature is capable of is within the reach of human nature at large."

(*b*) *Leslie Stephen's view.*

Leslie Stephen, who is also an advocate of Evolutional Hedonism, differs with Spencer in certain respects. It is Mr. Leslie Stephen who expounds clearly and consistently the doctrine of the organic nature of society. But Spencer, though he may be said to have been the founder of it, holds it with a feeble grasp, and expounds it in an external way, as though it were an interesting analogy or metaphor. According to Leslie Stephen, society is an organism, of which the individual is a member. In describing the ethical end, therefore, we must substitute for the greatest happiness of the greatest number the health of the social organism, or, still more accurately, of the social tissue.* Moral laws are the conditions of social vitality, and morality is "the sum of the preservative instincts of a society." "Corresponding to social welfare or health, the objective end, there is, inthe members of society, a social instinct, or sympathy with that welfare or health." "The conscience is the utterance of the public spirit of the race, ordering us to fulfil the primary conditions of its welfare." This is the true account of conscience according to Mr. Leslie Stephen.

Though Mr. Leslie Stephen's Ethics is Hedonistic, it is not so markedly Hedonistic as the Ethics of Spencer. Mr. L. Stephen admits that the utilitarian and the evolutionist criteria are not divergent; on the contrary, they tend necessarily to coincide. Nevertheless, he holds that "the common rule is that each organism is better as it obeys the conditions of health, but we cannot found any common rule upon happiness, the standard of which changes as the organism itself changes."

Mr. L. Stephen does not accept Spencer's theory of an "absolute and ultimate end" to which we are moving, and

* Mr. Stephen prefers the term "social tissue" to "social organism," because, though continuous, the race has not the unity of the higher organisms.

repudiates his distinction between Absolute and Relative Ethics. Spencer distinctly recognises an absolute end to which conduct is directed, and indeed he carries the conception of an absolute end so far that he even propounds the idea of an absolute system of Ethics, not relating to the present world at all, but rather to a world in which adjustment to environment shall have been completely brought about. Mr. L. Stephen rejects this entirely.

(c) *Prof. Alexander's view.*

Prof. Alexander also applies the idea of the social organism or rather the "social order," as he calls it. His theory is substantially the same as that of L. Stephen. His theory of the moral ideal is explained in the following passages : "An act or person is measured by a certain standard or criterion of conduct, which has been called the moral ideal. This moral ideal is an adjusted order of conduct, which is based upon contending inclinations and establishes an equilibrium between them. Goodness is nothing but this adjustment in the equilibrated whole." (Moral Order and Progress, p. 399). According to Prof. Alexander, "in the moral life there is a process of natural selection in which the most efficient or most perfectly equilibrated type of conduct is preserved." "The war of natural selection," remarks Alexander, "is carried on in human affairs not against weaker or incompatible individuals, but against their ideals or modes of life. It does not suffer any mode of life to prevail or persist but one which is compatible with social welfare." In the case of morals, we are dealing "not with animals as such, but with minds."

In such cases "we have something of the following kind. A person arises (or a few persons) whose feelings, modified by more or less deliberate reflection, incline him to a new course of conduct. He dislikes cruelty or discourtesy, or he objects to seeing women with inferior freedom, or to the unlimited opportunity of intoxication. He may stand alone and with only a few friends to support him. His proposal may excite ridicule or scorn or hatred ; and if he is a great reformer, he may endure hardship and obloquy, or even death at the hands of the great

body of persons whom he offends. By degrees his ideas spread more and more ; people discover that they have similar leanings ; they are persuaded by him ; their previous antagonism to him is replaced by attachment to the new mode of conduct, the new political institution. The new ideas gather every day fresh strength, until at last they occupy the minds of a majority of persons, or even of nearly all." "Persuasion and education, in fact, without destruction, replace here the process of propagation of its own species and destruction of the rival ones, by which in the natural world species become numerically strong and persistent." "Persuasion corresponds to the extermination of the 'rivals', for the victory of mind over mind consists in persuasion." We see, then, that the origin of moral ideals, like the origin of species, is to be explained by a process of natural selection.

On a comparison of the views of Spencer, Stephen and Alexander, it is found that

(1) Spencer's theory is more Hedonistic ;

(2) his theory is more individualistic, though he deduces the essential features of our moral life from biological and sociological laws ; and

(3) he distinguishes between Absolute and Relative Ethics, but this distinction is rejected by other evolutionists.

Criticism.

A general criticism of Evolutionary Hedonism has been given before. We may here make some additional remarks on the view of Spencer.

(i) Spencer supposes that "the sense of duty or moral obligation will diminish as fast as moralisation increases." He believes that obligation is coercive, so that with the complete conciliation of the interests of the individual with those of society, the sense of obligation will disappear, and men will do with delight what is right. But his theory is based on a mistaken view. Obligation is not coercive. It acts by moral suasion and does not disappear, but has its authority only the better recognised when it is merged in delight.

(ii) Spencer supposes that "increase of life" which is the end of evolution and is to be the portion of "the completely adapted man in a completely evolved society" is valuable, because it brings an increase of pleasure along with it. He thus supports Hedonism. But, as Prof. Muirhead very aptly observes, "It might be asked whether, as a matter of fact, this 'increase of life' does bring 'increase of happiness'. Are the more highly developed nations and individuals happier than the less developed ? It might, indeed, be argued that the greater the variety of powers and capacities developed in mankind, the greater the capacities of enjoyment. But that is just the point that is contested. * * We may fairly doubt whether more highly developed powers of mind and conscience necessarily bring with them the increase of happiness. It is quite certain that they are apt to throw the individual or the nation possessing them into situations where the sacrifice of happiness seems to be required ; so that, as Mr. Stephen admits, to exhort a man to virtue may be 'to exhort him to acquire a faculty which will, in many cases, make him less fit than the less moral man for getting the greatest amount of happiness from a given combination of circumstances'." (Elements of Ethics).*

(iii) Spencer supposes that a time will come when there will be a perfect adjustment of the inner to the outer conditions of existence and consequently conflict, pain and imperfection will be entirely excluded. There will be thus perfect equilibrium, complete happiness and finished virtue. But this is only a dream of Spencer. Is such a "completely adapted man," as Spencer supposes, a possible conception ? Are we justified in admitting the possibility of a society so completely adapted to its environment and consisting of wills so completely harmonised with one another that every element of pain, even

* Cf. Prof. Sorley, Ethics of Naturalism (p. 248) : "The ends of Evolutionism and of Hedonism cannot be made to explain one another. The theory which starts with a maximum of pleasure as the ultimate end, but points to the course of evolution as showing how that end is to be realised, is confronted by the fact that the development of life does not always tend to increase pleasure and that the laws of its development cannot therefore be safely adopted as maxims for the attainment of pleasure."

that expressed by the word 'obligation', will disappear? Referring to the question of the possibility of a perfect equilibrium, Prof. Muirhead remarks, "That progress means the establishment of equilibrium between ever higher and more differentiated functions in society and the individual is undoubted; but it is undoubted that in each case the equilibrium is established only to be broken into again by new forces which have to be equilibrated, new differences that have to be reconciled. Of an absolute and final equilibrium of the kind demanded, from which pain and conflict will be excluded, evolution knows nothing. The only analogue to it in nature is death. Where there is life, there is progress. In death alone (individual or national) there is final equilibrium." (Elements of Ethics.) Referring to the question of coincidence between virtue and happiness, Leslie Stephen says, "The attempt to establish an absolute coincidence between virtue and happiness is in Ethics what the attempting to square the circle or to discover perpetual motion is in geometry or mechanics."

(iv) Spencer's theory involves the fallacy of "putting the cart before the horse." What is meant by saying that the development of our lives consists in a continuous process of adjustment to our environment? We know that the process of adjustment is continually going on in our lives. The progress of our knowledge, the progress of arts, the progress of morality and religion, all imply such adjustment. By saying that two things are not adjusted to each other, we mean that "we have some idea of a relation in which they ought to stand and in which at present they do not stand." Adjustment in any case is meaningless unless we presuppose some ideal form of adjustment, some end that is consciously or unconsciously sought. But if this is true, we ought to start with the idea of the *end* rather than with the mere idea of the process of adjustment. "Though it seems natural to begin at the beginning in our explanation and move on, through the process, to the end, yet since in this case it is the end by which the process is determined, it is rather at the end that we ought to begin."

CHAPTER XIII.

ETHICAL STANDARD.

INTUITIONAL THEORIES.

§ 1. **Æsthetic Theory (Beauty as Standard).**

According to this theory, the moral standard lies in beauty or the æsthetic aspect of an act (Hutcheson Shaftesbury, Herbart, Ruskin). Hence it is called 'the æsthetic theory'. It derives the notion of duty from the admiration of the beautiful and overlooks the distinction between the right and the beautiful. "What is beautiful," remarks Shaftesbury, "is harmonious and proportionable; what is harmonious and proportionable is true, and what is at once both beautiful and true is, of consequence, agreeable and good." Hutcheson also speaks of the "moral beauty and deformity of actions." Similarly, Ruskin observes, "Taste is not only a part and an index of morality; it is the *only* morality. The first and last and closest trial question to any living creature is, 'what do you like?' Tell me what you like, and I will tell you what you are." (*Crown of Wild Olive*). Beauty and goodness are one and the same. Virtue means the beauty of moral excellence. We should cultivate our taste if we want to be virtuous. The moral faculty, according to this school, is the æsthetic sense which is an internal sense intuitively apprehending the moral quality or beauty of an act. Thus the doctrine is allied to the Moral Sense Theory explained before (*Vide* Ch. IX, pp. 117-120).*

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* "No sooner," observes Shaftesbury, "are actions viewed, no sooner the human affections and passions discerned, than straight an inward eye distinguishes, and sees the fair and shapely, the amiable, the admirable, apart from the deformed, the foul, the odious or the despicable." (*The Moralists*, II, p. 415). Hutcheson also describes the moral sense as that "which makes rational actions appear beautiful or deformed."

To sum up: The rightness or wrongness of an act means its beauty or deformity. The right is but an aspect of the beautiful. Our conscience, moral faculty or moral sense may be described as the 'æsthetic sense'. It directly and spontaneously reveals the moral beauty or deformity of human activity. Thus it is a faculty of intuition or direct apprehension. It is an internal sense—an innate capacity of perception. Our judgments of right and wrong are based upon the agreeable sentiment of beauty and disagreeable sentiment of deformity. Beauty is not merely the index of goodness; beauty and goodness are identical. Hence the theory is called 'the æsthetic theory of morality' or 'moral æstheticism'.

Criticism.

(1) Æsthetic and moral sentiments are no doubt analogous to some extent, and that is the reason why many have identified them. We know that moral and æsthetic sentiments are marked by disinterestedness and the presence of an agreeable element. But though they agree thus far, they are considerably different; for moral sentiment is relative to activity and is accompanied by a consciousness of duty or obligation. Thus, morality has no meaning apart from voluntary activity, and is moreover marked by authoritativeness or sense of obligation, but the same cannot be said with regard to beauty. Besides, our moral conduct involves conflict and overcoming of hostile desires, and thus it does not give rise to *pure* pleasure, but to a mixed experience. But the contemplation of beauty is always accompanied by pure pleasure.

(2) The greatest objection to every form of moral sense theory is that it makes moral judgment depend on the most variable and unreliable of all mental functions, *viz.*, feeling. Thus the Æsthetic standard, resting as it does on feeling, is not uniform, but rather variable, while the

moral standard is comparatively constant, as it rests on rational conviction.

(3) Hence Æsthetic Ethics degrades the estimate of virtue by reducing it to a mere relish.

(4) What is sufficient to excite æsthetic feeling may yet be unable to excite moral sentiment. Thus the conditions of beauty and morality are different.

(5) Beauty is not identical with goodness. The beautiful are not necessarily the right, *e. g.*, an immoral dramatic performance.

(6) Moral experience has certain peculiarities which are not met with in æsthetic experience, *e. g.*, the feeling of approbation or disapprobation, consciousness of merit or demerit.

We conclude, then, that moral æstheticism cannot supply us with a sufficient standard of morality—an adequate criterion or means of distinguishing right and wrong. The sentiments of beauty and deformity cannot form the ultimate standard of morality, as they are blind and variable in character. Moral goodness may be described as a kind of beauty, but what is beautiful may not be morally good. The conditions and principles of morality are not the same as those of beauty.

§ 2. Dianœtic theory (Immutable Law and Eternal fitness).*

(*a*) *Clarke's view.*

Clarke holds that certain differences and relations among things are inherent in their very nature. There are, he says, certain eternal and immutable relations of things and persons, and these constitute the foundation of truth and morality. Human relations are fixed, eternal and immutable like mathematical relations, and they give rise to duties or moral truths which are intuitively

* This theory is sometimes called *Intellectual Intuitionism.*

apprehended by human reason. "Morality depends on the fitness or unfitness of the relations in which we stand to each other and the rest of the universe."

In short, just as self-evident mathematical truths arise out of immutable mathematical relations and are apprehended intuitively by reason, so duties or moral truths arise out of fixed and immutable human relations and are discerned intuitively by reason. When the relation is different, the duty is different. For instance, the relation of a teacher to his pupil is different from the relation of a pupil to his teacher; and so the duty of a teacher towards his pupil is different from the duty of a pupil towards his teacher.

Thus certain forms of action are eternally and necessarily right or wrong in themselves, independently of all self-interest and all will—just as the radii of a circle are all equal, independently of place, time and circumstances. Even Divine Will cannot arbitrarily create the distinction of right and wrong.

As Clarke says, "The eternal and necessary differences make it *fit* and *reasonable* for creatures so to act; they cause it to be their duty or lay an obligation upon them so to do, even separate from the consideration of these rules being the positive will or command of God; and also antecedent to any respect or regard, expectation or apprehension of any particular private and personal advantage or disadvantage, reward or punishment, either present or future, annexed either by natural consequence, or by positive appointment, to the practising or neglecting of those rules."

Hence cultivation of knowledge is of supreme importance to us, for, without an adequate knowledge of the true relations of things, we cannot be virtuous. No doubt we

intuitively apprehend such relations, but culture can perfect such knowledge.

Criticism.

According to Clarke, morality depends on the fitness and unfitness, congruity and incongruity of relations. But it is easy to see that it is morality which explains fitness, and not conversely. A certain relation or act can be judged as morally fit only by reference to the moral end served by it. As Prof. Mackenzie says, "Fitness, in any sense in which it can serve as the basis of moral theories, must be fitness for something—*i e.*—it must involve some reference to an end or ideal." (Manual of Ethics, p. 176). Similarly, Martineau observes, "It is not fitness that makes an act moral, but it is its morality that makes it fit. From some other source, then, we must be pre-occupied by a conviction of right and wrong before we can take up what is here erroneously described as its natural and sufficient language"

(*b*) *Cudworth's view.*

In his treatise on *Eternal and Immutable Morality*, Cudworth speaks of the "essential and eternal distinctions of good and evil." He maintains that moral distinctions are independent of mere arbitrary will, whether human or divine. According to him, the distinctions of good and evil have an objective reality, cognisable by reason no less than the relations of space or number. Human reason or understanding intuitively discovers or apprehends the 'eternal truths, principles, notions, categories or intelligible ideas' which ultimately rest on Divine nature, and which constitute the basis of all knowledge and existence. The knowledge of these comes to the human mind from the Divine; for man shares in the light of the Divine Reason.

Thus, there are eternal and immutable principles of morality which are universal, necessary, self-evident and

unquestionable.* Moral judgment consists in the application of a notion, principle or pre-conception to a particular case. When, for instance, we pronounce a particular act to be just or honest, we apply the notion or conception of justice or honesty to the particular case. Right conduct presupposes right judgment, and this implies an adequate knowledge of the ideas, notions, conceptions, categories or principles. Hence cultivation of intelligence is of supreme importance for us.

General review.

It cannot be denied that there is an 'eternal and immutable' element in morality. But still the Intuitional theory has several defects :—

(1) In the first place, it does not explain the moral principles or discover their rational warrant (See page 122 of this book). It is a mere psychology of moral consciousness. As Prof Seth observes, "The real question of Ethics is not, as Intuitionists have stated and answered it How do we come to know moral distinctions? But, what are these distinctions? What is the moral ideal—the single criterion which shall yield such distinctions?" (Ethical Principles, p. 182).

(2) Further, it cannot resolve the conflict of moral principles. We know that the ultimate principles of morals sometimes conflict with one another, *e.g.*, the principle of benevolence may conflict with the principle of veracity. But Intuitionism cannot overcome the conflict, for, according to it, all moral principles are equally obligatory. (See Ch. XXII, § 3).

* Cudworth gives no systematic exposition of the ethical principles which he holds thus to be intuitively apprehended.

CHAPTER XIV.

Ethical Standard.

THE STANDARD ACCORDING TO KANT.*

(*Rigorism*).

According to Kant, Reason has the supreme place in human constitution. It is Reason which builds up the conception of the world out of the materials supplied through the senses, and it is Reason which supplies us with the moral law which is absolutely binding on us and should be the regulator of our moral conduct.† The moral law which is intuited by reason is, to use Kant's own expression, a 'categorical imperative.' It is an 'imperative', a command, as opposed to an assertion of facts. Further, the command, implied in the conception of the moral law, is not 'hypothetical.'

* Kant's moral theory has been regarded as a form of *Rigorism*. It is sometimes called *Purism* and is of an *ascetic* character. It may also be regarded as a form of *Rational Intuitionism*. It should be borne in mind that the theories of Cudworth, Clarke and Kant may be looked upon as forms of the *Legal Theory*, inasmuch as they give us "internal law as standard."

† The substance of Kantian Ethics has been very admirably explained by Prof. Muirhead in the following words :—

"It is founded on the view that the predominating element in the self is reason, which, as essentially opposed to desire, asserts itself in the authoritative and categorical demands of the moral imperative. On this theory the end of man as a rational being is unconditional obedience to this imperative, as the law of his inner being or true self. Pleasure, so far from being the end, cannot enter into our conception of the end of action without vitiating any claim which it may otherwise have to be considered virtuous. In order to be good, an act must be done out of reverence for the reason which enjoins it, and without respect to the consequences. As opposed to the theory that the end is pleasure for pleasure's sake, this theory has aptly been called the theory of duty for duty's sake."

It is subject to no qualification; it is to be obeyed, not because it helps us to attain some end, but because it is an absolute and unconditional command. This is what is meant by saying that the moral law is a categorical imperative. As such, it is independent of desire. There may not be a desire to fulfil the law; obedience to the moral law may be the most painful alternative—still the moral law is recognised to have a 'binding force' upon our will. For we cannot know the right without knowing that it is absolutely or unconditionally obligatory.

The moral law, which is an absolute imperative of duty, has no reference to any external end, such as wealth, health, pleasure, knowledge, but simply to the right direction of the will itself; and this is an internal end, and not an external one. Every external end can give rise only to a *hypothetical* imperative of the form—"*If* we seek that end, we are bound to act in a particular way, with a view to its attainment." But moral law, as said above, is a 'categorical imperative', demanding unconditional obedience; it is the guide of the will itself. The good will is that which acts out of a pure regard for the moral law, and not from inclination. The moral law issues the most general and abstract command on the will; and the content of the categorical imperative is, "Act only on the maxim which thou canst at the same time will to become a universal law"—"act so that your line of action may become a law universal"—"act only in such a way as you could will that every one should act under the same general conditions."

Thus, according to Kant, actions are right only when they are done for the sake of duty—only in so far as they are performed for the sake of their rightness. "Duty for duty's sake" is the true rule of life. Duty should be performed whatever may happen—truth should be spoken without

regard to consequences, and justice should be done "even if the world be destroyed."* An act, to be virtuous, must, therefore, exclude the influence of desire and be the outcome of a pure regard for moral law. Kant would condemn the act of a person who from love or kindness nurses a sick person or helps the poor; such love or kindness would be called by him *pathological.* He would praise such an act when it is done out of pure respect for the moral law. "In order that an action should be morally good, it is not enough that it *conforms* to the moral law, but it must also be done *for the sake of the law.*"

Kant draws in this connection a distinction between the *autonomy* and the *heteronomy* of the will. The will is autonomous when it is a law to itself—*i. e.*, acts solely from a sense of duty, and "independently of any property of the objects of volition." The will is heteronomous when it is guided by the ideas of those objects and follows the solicitations of sense. Good will is autonomous; it is intrinsically and unconditionally good; it is, in fact, the only true good. † Like a jewel, it shines with its own light.

Criticism.

(i) When Kant divides the contents of mind into sharp opposites and sets up an antagonism between reason

* *Fiat justitia pereat mundus*—Let justice be done even if the world be destroyed.

† Kant's view is summarised in the following passage which occurs in his Metaphysic of Morals: "Nothing can possibly be conceived in the world, or even out of it, which can be called good, without qualification, except a good will. Intelligence, wit, judgment, and the other talents of the mind, however they may be named, or courage, resolution, perseverance as qualities of temperament, are undoubtedly good and desirable in many respects; but these gifts of nature may also become extremely bad and mischievous if the will which is to make use of them, and which therefore constitutes what is called character, is not good. It is the same with the gifts of fortune. A good will appears to constitute the indispensable condition even of being worthy of happiness."

and sensibility, he overlooks the psychological truth that mind is an organic unity. Feelings and desires are not objects foreign to the rational self; they have meaning only in relation to it. They are but modifications of the mind. In fact, there can be no desire without thought or reason; nor can there be voluntary activity in a thinking or rational self without desire. As Prof. Muirhead observes, "Even in its highest and apparently purest manifestations, as, for instance, in the search for truth, reason is determined by interest, *i.e.*, by feeling and desire. The rational life, in such a case, consists, not in acting independently of desire—this is impossible—but in subordinating the lower or more particular desires (*e.g.*, the desire to amass wealth for oneself and family) to the higher and more universal (*e.g.*, the discovery of truth and the benefit of the species)." (Elements of Ethics).

(ii) Kant errs in holding that sensibility is necessarily irrational and that morality consists in totally sacrificing the sensible self and leading a life guided by pure reason. He forgets that virtue is the harmony of rationality and sensibility. He fails to see that conformity to moral law or duty is but one aspect of the highest good, the other aspect being the transfiguration, the exaltation and refinement, under rational control, of that sensibility in which lie the springs of action. *Regulation, and not extirpation,* of sensibility, is the true rule of life.

Indeed, Kant overlooks the fact that moral conduct is impossible without desires and impulses, for these supply the materials for volition. Is it possible for a man to act morally apart from the desires and interests he actually possesses? Moral conduct consists in the ordering of the desires according to some law or principle, and not in getting rid of them altogether.

(iii) Kant's theory is really of an ascetic character, for it

disparages sensibility and demands the suppression of it. It commands us to extinguish all our affections and desires—all our propensities and inclinations. It thus not only asks us to kill a part of our essential nature (which is impossible), but also makes its moral ideal unrealisable in the world. In fact, no natural inclination has to be expunged. Each has its appointed place in the economy of life. No part of our nature is absolutely bad; it becomes bad when it transcends its legitimate sphere of exercise. "It is a false idea that religion requires the extermination of any principle, desire, appetite or passion, which our Creator has implanted. Our nature is a whole, a beautiful whole, and no part can be spared. You might as properly and innocently lop off a limb from the body, as eradicate any natural desire from the mind. All our appetites are in themselves innocent and useful, ministering to the general weal of the soul. They are like the elements of the natural world, parts of a wise and beneficent system, but, like those elements, are beneficent only when restrained."

(iv) According to Kant, no conduct can be regarded as truly virtuous which rests on feeling. He would condemn the act of a person who from love or kindness nurses a sick person and would praise it when it is done out of pure regard for the moral law or the law of reason. He places under one general condemnation all our affections and desires (making an exception in the case of one impulse—*viz.*, respect for the moral law). But much of the conduct that men commonly praise springs rather from feeling than from any direct application of reason. Kant's Rigorism leaves no room for many noble virtues of common life, and makes virtue forced and artificial. The virtuous acts that we admire so much—the acts of an affectionate mother, a sincere friend, a true patriot, a self-denying philanthropist—proceed from the fullness of the heart, and not from dry respect

for the moral law.* We love virtue in proportion as it is spontaneous.

This has been well expressed by Wordsworth in his *Ode to Duty*—

"There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them ; who, in love and truth,
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth ;
Glad hearts ! without reproach or blot ;
Who do thy work, and know it not."

(v) Kant regards the Moral Law as inexplicable. It is taken to be an end in itself ; comformity to it, by itself, is supposed to be the ultimate good. It is said to be a categorical imperative demanding unconditional obedience ; but no explanation is given thereof. "Why does the law exist ? We do not know. This is what Kant calls the primary fact of reason. *Sic volo, sic jubeo*—so I will, so I order ; this is the formula of the moral law. We may recognise it by a certain sign which is the *universality* of the law, but we cannot explain it." But Kant forgets that an explanation can be given only by subordinating the *Law* to the *End*, *Duty* to the *Good*. He fails to see that even the moral law supposes a goal. The free

* The poet Schiller, an ardent student of the Kantian system, ridicules the hard formalism of Kant's view in an epigram. He represents an enquirer saying to a Kantian philosopher :—

"Willingly serve I my friends, but I do it, alas ! with affection ;
Hence I am plagued with doubt ; virtue I have not attained."

And he represents the Kantian philosopher replying in the following way :—

"This is your only resource ! you must stubbornly seek to abhor them,
For thus you can do with disgust that which the law may enjoin."

In justice to Kant, it must be said, however, that this is an exaggeration of Kant's theory ; for he does not go so far as to demand the presence of abhorrence.

rational nature of man rebels against the slavish obedience to law out of simple respect for law. Man obeys the moral law, because the realisation of his true nature depends on it.*

(vi) The extreme rigour of the Kantian theory expresses itself in another way. Kant permits no exceptions to his moral imperatives. According to him, no consideration should prevent a man from doing or should make him in any way modify an act, which is prescribed by the moral reason. But, as Prof. Mackenzie points out, "The moral sense of the best men seems to say that there is no commandment, however sacred (unless it be the commandment of love), that does not, under certain circumstances, release its claims." Kant's view is too rigoristic in this respect.

(vii) Kantian Ethics requires that, to be virtuous and to earn moral merit, we should always act out of pure reverence for the moral law which is the law of reason, in opposition to the suggestions of desire. This virtually implies that, to be virtuous, we must continue in a lower plane of moral culture; for it is in such a condition alone that one can act out of regard for the moral law and reject the solicitations of sense —it is in such a lower condition alone that there can be a conflict between reason and passion, duty and inclination. In a higher plane of moral culture, the conflict becomes

* It may be pointed out in this connection that Kant's Philosophy shows a tendency to approach the Eudæmonistic theory which subordinates the conception of Law to the conception of the Good and explains the former by the latter. In his second statement of the law, he gives the formula, "So act as to regard humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of another, always as an end, never as a means." There is reason to think that Kant here means by humanity the concrete personality of each man to himself. The law is valid, because humanity is an end to itself. He thus passes over to Perfectionism or Eudæmonism and subordinates the conception of law to that of the end which is the realisation of the individual and universal self.

less strong. In fact, moral progress consists in diminishing the conflict between duty and inclination—in making virtue more and more spontaneous or natural and the consciousness of reverence for the moral law less and less prominent. The Kantian theory leads to this paradox : virtue and moral merit suppose the perpetuity of the conflict between reason and passion, duty and inclination, so that with the disappearance of the conflict (which is required by moral progress), virtue ceases to exist. As Prof. Muirhead observes, "Seeing that virtue consists in free determination by reason, and reason is not otherwise definable on this theory save as the antithesis of desire, the virtuous man, so far from being independent of desire, is dependent on its continued resistance for the opportunity of realising himself in conflict with it. Virtue, in fact, lives in the life of its antagonist. Final and complete victory over it would involve its own destruction along with the destruction of desire. This may be called the paradox of asceticism." (Elements of Ethics).

(viii) According to Kant, all the moral principles are summed up in the formula—"act according to a maxim which can at the same time make itself a universal law." The formula undoubtedly expresses the universal character of the Moral Law or the ethical ideal. Nevertheless, it has a *negative* rather than a *positive* value. We can ascertain, by reference to it, what we *should not do* under certain circumstances ; but we cannot deduce a complete code of positive duties from it. As Prof. Mackenzie says, "The principle laid down by Kant affords in many cases a safe *negative* guide in conduct. If we cannot will that all men should, under like conditions, act as we are doing, we may generally be sure that we are acting wrongly. When, however, we endeavour to extract positive guidance from the formula—when we try to ascertain, by means of it, not merely what we should abstain from doing, but what we should do—it begins to appear that it is merely

a formal principle from which no definite matter can be derived."

In fact, Kant's maxim is simply a maxim of *self-consistency*, *i.e.*, it requires that we should be self-consistent in our actions. But the application of the maxim always presupposes a certain given material. The possibility of the application of Kant's maxim depends on the existence of concrete rights and duties. The existence of such rights and duties is presupposed in every application of the Kantian principle. Thus, in order to show that stealing leads to inconsistency or self-contradiction, we must presuppose the right of private property. "It is inconsistent to take the property of another, if we recognise the legitimacy of private property. But if any one denies this, there is no inconsistency in his acting accordingly." A man who refuses aid to the distressed cannot *consistently* expect aid from another, if misfortune overtakes him. But there is nothing contradictory in willing that none should help others. We first assume that it is our duty to aid the distressed and then show that it is inconsistent to refuse, and, at the same time, to expect aid. Thus we cannot deduce the concrete duties of life from this principle, seeing that they are presupposed in every application of it.*

* Kant is partly aware of this defect. He expressly states that "the formula is only a negative principle, and that the matter of practical maxims is to be derived from a different source, *viz.*, our own perfection and the happiness of others". Thus the positive side of our duty is largely to be derived from utilitarian considerations, while moral reason simply urges us to be self-consistent.

NOTE ON RIGORISM.

It has been remarked above that Kant's moral theory is essentially rigoristic. A brief account of the nature and history of Rigorism as a moral theory is given below.

Rigorism (Lat., *rigor*, inflexibility, severity, from *rigere*, to be stiff, to stand firm) is "the view of moral life which sees in self-conquest, or rather self-suppression, the ideal of conduct." It is the theory that the highest good consists in a purely rational activity and the suppression of sensibility—in the strict obedience to the Moral Law revealed by reason out of a pure regard for it. Thus, according to this theory, obedience to moral law, out of a pure self-less motive, without any regard to the pleasurable or painful consequences, is, in itself, and apart from any ulterior end to which it might lead, the highest good. As Tennyson says :—

"———to live by law,
Acting the law we live by without fear,
And, because right is right, to follow right,
Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence."

Rigorism has taken various forms, reappearing from age to age. Extreme Rigorism altogether ignores the claims of sensibility. According to it, virtue consists in a pure rational activity and the suppression of all inclinations and desires. Extreme Rigorism is found in the teaching of *Cynics*, according to whom pleasure is an evil and the true good consists in being independent of all forms of passion and desire. They teach that the highest good consists in becoming *self-sufficient, i.e.*, independent of the world and external circumstances—in shaking off the slavery of circumstances and raising one's self above the pains and pleasures of life. The Cynics ultimately began to despise not merely pains and sensuous pleasures, but even the ordinary decencies and refinements of life, and hence they were often ridiculed. "An utter indifference to pleasure and pain and a scorn for the multitude" was their maxim.*

* The reader will remember in this connection the stories of Diogenes the Cynic.

A milder form of Rigorism is found in the teachings of the Stoics. "The Stoics proved themselves superior to their Cynic precursors in presenting a more dignified view of human personality, and in the emphasis they laid upon the active life ; but they were in fundamental agreement with them in holding the chief good to be life in accordance with reason, by which was meant the life in which passion and desire played the smallest, reason the largest part."

The Christian ascetics of the middle ages who "opposed the spirit to the flesh" were also Rigorists. In fact, Asceticism is Rigorism. The ascetics of all ages and climes hold it to be highly meritorious to abstain from marriage and to renounce the world and to be totally indifferent to pleasure and pain.

In modern times, Kant was a rigorist. As has been said before, he disparaged sensibility and demanded its suppression. According to him, "A good will which acts in conformity to a rational law out of a pure regard for it, is the only thing that is good in and for itself ; it has absolute worth, wholly regardless of what it accomplishes and how it succeeds in the world."*

* For the criticism of this theory, see pages 200-206 of this book.

CHAPTER XV.

Ethical Standard.

PERFECTION AS STANDARD.

(Perfectionism, Eudæmonism, Energism—
Idealistic Ethics).

§ 1. **Preliminary remarks.**

From what has been said above, it is obvious that we must seek the ultimate standard of moral judgment in the idea of the ultimate end or the highest good of man. But if it be true that the problem of the moral standard is not solved so long as we do not determine the ultimate end of life—the highest good or the *Summum Bonum* of man, we must try to determine precisely in what the ultimate end or the highest good consists. We have found before the inadequacy of the Hedonistic theory of the good. The highest good cannot consist in pleasure for its own sake. Nor can it consist in conformity to law (internal or external) for its own sake, for, as we have seen before, law can be right and good only in so far as the conduct enjoined by it is conducive to an *end which is good.* A law without reference to an end is arbitrary and unmeaning. We have also found that the highest good cannot consist in the mere negative state of *self-suppression*, *self-conquest*, *self-abnegation* or *self-sacrifice*—in "the repression of all individual desires, and sinking all the interests of the self as an individual." The highest good must consist in something positive and involve the perfection, and not the abolition, of the individuality of the person. The highest good cannot consist either in the surrender to a life of sensibility (as Hedonism supposes), or in the extirpation of sensibility (as Rigorism supposes). It consists in self-realisation or self-perfection ; and this involves the regulation of sensibility—the systematisation

of impulses and desires under the guidance of reason, accompanied by a feeling of inner satisfaction (happiness or blessedness). Though the essential element in the nature of man is the rational or spiritual principle within him, still human nature is not exclusively rational; it is also sentient. Hence Hedonism and Rationalism or Rigorism are both one-sided theories. The true moral theory is that which reconciles the two—which conceives the *Summum Bonum* as the harmony or equilibrium of the different elements of human nature. This is substantially the view of Plato and Aristotle of ancient times, and Hegel and the Neo-Hegelians in modern times, such as Green, Caird, Dewey, D'Arcy, Mackenzie, Muirhead, Seth, Paulsen and many others. The theory has been described by various names, such as Perfectionism, Eudæmonism and Energism.*

§ 2. General Account of Perfectionism.

As has been said before, according to this theory, the highest good consists in self-realisation or the perfection of an agent's own nature attained by his voluntary effort.

* The term *Perfectionism* is generally used to signify the moral theory of Hegel and the Neo-Hegelians, such as Green, Mackenzie, Muirhead, D'Arcy &c., and in this sense it has been used here. It may be used in a wider sense to mean any moral theory which makes any form of perfection or excellence to be the end of life and the standard of rectitude. If we take the word in this wide sense, we may regard even the theory of Spencer and L. Stephen as a form of Perfectionism.

The word *Eudæmonism* is also somewhat ambiguous. It is sometimes identified with Hedonism. Here *Eudæmonism* has been used in its original Aristotelian sense, and the theory of Eudæmonism has been carefully distinguished from Hedonism. The word 'Eudæmonism' is derived from the Greek word *Eudæmonia* meaning *well-being* or *welfare*.

The word *Energism* has been used by Dr. Paulsen as the name of the moral theory developed by him. His theory is substantially the same as the theory of Perfectionism or Eudæmonism.

In other words, it consists in the full realisation of the self—the harmonious development of our whole nature. Actions are morally good or right, if they are consistent with, and conducive to, the highest development or perfection of the self. Thus the idea of the perfect self is the moral standard.

We see, then, that, according to this view, the supreme end or good consists in the perfection of self; and this perfection is to be attained through the self's own free, rationally regulated effort. It consists in what may be called *self-realisation*, *i.e.*, realisation, in due measure, of every excellence that man has in him to attain. In other words, it consists in the working out, by one's own will and effort, of whatever potentialities of higher excellence may be latent in the self. The theory is called *Perfectionism*, because it holds up an ideal of mental perfection to be realised by the self's own effort. It obviously indicates that our moral life is essentially a process of growth or development.

The theory of Perfectionism admits the organic nature of society and the reciprocity of the individual good and the common good. According to it, society is an organism and the members of it are its self-conscious limbs. Hence it is by contributing to the perfection of society that the individual members can contribute to their own perfection.* "To seek life alone in isolation and selfishness is to lose life; to forget one's own life in promotion of the common good is to find life." "The individual can attain his good only in and through, along with and by means of, the good of others, so that in promoting the good of others he is promoting his own good.". The truth is that individual minds have no isolated existence, but share in a common mental life. Hence the development of mind is rendered possible only by the

* See Ch. XII, page 175. See also Ch. XX.

co-operation of many minds. In fact, the highest good may be described as a *common* good. By this is meant, as Green points out, that, as a rational being, "man cannot contemplate himself in a better state or on the way to the best, without contemplating others, not only as means to that better state, but also as sharing it with him." (Prolegomena to Ethics, p. 210).

From what has been said above, it is obvious that the theory of Perfectionism reconciles Egoism and Altruism. Egoism gives us the rule—"Each one for himself." In other words, it says that each individual must seek his own good to the disregard of that of others. Altruism gives us the rule :—"Each one for all." In other words, it says that each individual must seek the good of others to the sacrifice of his own. These theories thus assume that the good of self and that of others are opposed and exclusive. But Perfectionism, as the true moral theory, points out that the good of the individual and the general good are reciprocal and relative to each other. It shows that the highest good of self and the highest good of others are ultimately identical, so that the old antagonism between Egoism and Altruism vanishes. There can be no such thing as absolute altruism, any more than absolute egoism.

Indeed, the doctrine of self-perfection or self-realisation, rightly interpreted, will reconcile all the conflicting theories. It reconciles the doctrines of Asceticism and Epicureanism, Rationalism and Sensualism, Rigorism and Hedonism. It incorporates into itself all that is essential and true in them and in this way goes beyond them. We know that extreme Rigorism or Asceticism demands the extirpation of sensibility. It commands us to crush all our affections, passions and desires and to lead the life of pure reason. In other words, it seeks to eliminate them from the rational nature

of man. The total extinction of our animal nature, the suppression of all desires and the attainment of a pure universality constitute its ideal. Extreme Hedonism, again, makes gratification of sensibility the aim of human life. It maintains that the highest good consists in pleasurable or agreeable feeling. If Rigorism goes to one extreme and makes reason all in all, Hedonism goes to the other extreme and makes sensibility all in all.

But the theory of self-realisation mediates between these two extremes. While eagerly maintaining the supremacy of reason in human constitution, it does not advocate the extirpation of sensibility. According to it, sensibility is a factor in our moral life, but its place is subordinate to that of reason which reveals the moral law as absolutely imperative. It demands, of course, the control of all ignoble inclinations. But it rightly points out that no part of our nature is absolutely bad ; it becomes bad when it transcends its legitimate sphere of exercise. Even our animal instincts are not meant to be suppressed. Our duty is to *moralise* and *not to extinguish* or *annul* them. (See pages 201 and 202 of this book).

We see, then, that, according to this theory, self-realisation, which is the supreme end of life, involves the ascendency of reason and the consequent systematization of impulses and desires ; and this is accompanied by a feeling of inner satisfaction which may be best described as the feeling of happiness, blessedness or bliss.* Thus self-realisation brings self-satisfaction. In this sense, there is an element of truth in the contention of the Hedonist that happiness is the end of life. Though the feeling of happiness or satisfaction is not, properly speaking, the moral end, it is nevertheless an inseparable and essential element in its attainment. In proportion as we realise our true selves—

* For the distinction between pleasure and happiness, see page 156 of this book.

in proportion as we work out the higher excellences of our nature, we attain happiness, peace and bliss.

> "Resolve to be thyself; and know that he
> Who finds himself loses his misery."

We may now indicate more precisely the place of reason and feeling in moral life, even at the risk of repetition.

(i) Idealistic Ethics always maintains that reason has the supreme place in human constitution. But it points out that the function of reason is not to eliminate, but to transform and co-ordinate the impulses and desires. It maintains that sensibility is not to be annihilated, but made the vehicle and instrument of the realisation of the true or rational self. Self-realisation consists, not in *crushing* our desires and passions, but in *harmonising* them with reason. It is reason which determines what is *universally* desirable or ought to be desired by all rational beings. It is reason which unifies or harmonises the conflicting desires of the self, or reduces them to a system in which some desires are placed in subjection to others; and this is done with the help of certain rational or moral principles which, being categorical imperatives, are not derived by inductive generalisations from the experiences of pleasure and pain. We may understand the ethical function of the rational self, if we compare it with its intellectual function. As the rational self builds up its conception of the world out of the crude materials called sensations, so it builds up its moral life out of the crude materials supplied by sensibility (*i.e.*, feelings and impulses). As Prof. Seth observes, "The business of self-realisation might be described as the work of moral synthesis. Since the time of Kant epistemology has found in rational synthesis the fundamental principle of knowledge. Green has elaborated the parallel, in this respect, between knowledge and morality, and shown us the activity of the rational

ego at the heart of the both. * * The task of the rational ego is, in the moral reference, the organisation of sensibility, as, in the intellectual case, it is the organisation of sensation." (Ethical Principles, p. 201.)

(ii) Idealistic Ethics also points out that a truly virtuous life is a happy life. In fact, that happiness alone is true happiness which is the incident of self-realisation or the harmonious development of our nature. Happiness is simply the "feeling of self-realisedness." We may go so far as to say that happiness is the index of a virtuous life. Aristotle defines a virtuous man as one who finds delight in performing virtuous acts. "No one," says he, "would call a man just who did not take pleasure in doing justice, nor generous who took no pleasure in acts of generosity, and so on." "He who abstains from the pleasures of the body and *rejoices* in the abstinence, is temperate, while he who is *vexed* at having to abstain, is profligate" (Peter's Translation, II, 3). Thus, according to Aristotle, an act is not truly virtuous, if its performance is not accompanied by a feeling of joy, delight or inner satisfaction ; and there is an important element of truth in his statement.

It should be borne in mind, however, that though virtuous activity is always pleasant, yet no properly virtuous act is performed with the *idea* and *desire* of pleasure or happiness. In this the idealistic or perfectionistic theory agrees with Rigorism. No less earnest than Rigorism, it points out that virtue is inconsistent with the seeking of pleasure—that a virtuous act must be performed for the sake of its virtue, and not for the sake of the feeling of satisfaction it will yield. In other words, it maintains that virtuous activity must always be disinterested. Moral conduct consists in doing what is right from the conviction that it *is* right, and for the sake of its rightness. "To desire virtue for pleasure is

inconsistent with that disinterestedness which is the mark of the love of virtue, properly so called."*

It further points out that "the pleasure of virtue is one which can only be attained on the express condition of its being not the object sought" (Cf. the Paradox of Hedonism). As Lecky very aptly observes, "A feeling of satisfaction follows the accomplishment of duty for itself; but if the duty be performed solely through the expectation of mental pleasure, conscience refuses to ratify the bargain."†

The above is a brief account of Perfectionism. As has been said before, Dr. Paulsen's moral theory (called by him *Energism*) is in substantial agreement with it. He says :

"That human life will be the most valuable which succeeds best in developing the highest powers of man and in subordinating the lower functions to the higher. A life, on the other hand, in which vegetative and animal functions, sensuous desires and blind passions have control, must be regarded as a lower abnormal form. A perfect human life is a life in which the *mind* attains to full and free growth and in which the *spiritual forces* reach their highest perfection in *thought, imagination* and *action*. * * Yet we must guard against a false spiritualization. The sensuous and even the animal side have their rights. The pleasures of perception and play which throw such a glamour around childhood, also belong to life; nay, we shall not exclude the pleasures of eating and drinking and kindred functions from the perfect life; only they must not presume to rule it." (A System of Ethics, Book II, Ch. II, pp. 278, 279).

* As Prof. Muirhead observes, "The man who is temperate because he desires the pleasures of temperance (whether these be earthly or heavenly, physical or social) is, as Plato pointed out, temperate by reason of a kind of intemperance."

† History of European Morals, Vol. I, p. 87.

Summary. From what has been said above, it is clear that

(i) The highest end or good must be the highest perfection of which human nature is capable. It is the complete realisation of the self—the harmonious development of human personality.

(ii) Actions are good or bad, right or wrong, according as they are conducive to or subversive of the supreme good indicated above.

(iii) The highest good described above is a *common* good. It is realisable only in a community or society of minds.

(iv) Self-realisation or the perfection of the self as a free, rational being implies, *not the extinction* of impulses and desires, but a *proper regulation*, *transformation* and *systematisation* of them with the help of *reason*.

(v) Such self-realisation is accompanied by a feeling of inner satisfaction.

(vi) This feeling of satisfaction may be called the "index of moral progress."

(vii) This theory incorporates into itself the elements of truth that are in the rival theories.

§ 3. True meaning of Eudæmonism.

The theory that has been worked out in § 2 may fairly be called *eudæmonistic*, if we take the word *Eudæmonism* in its original or Aristotelian sense. As pointed out before, the word comes from Gr. *eudæmonia*, meaning well-being or welfare. Referring to the term, Dr. Sidgwick observes in his History of Ethics, "The cardinal term is commonly translated 'happiness'. But the English word 'happiness' so definitely signifies a state of feeling that it will not admit the interpretation that Aristotle (as well as Plato and the Stoics) expressly gives to *eudæmonia*. Hence, to avoid serious confusion, it seems to me necessary to render 'eudæmonia' by the more unfamiliar 'well-being' or 'welfare.'" (P. 56, foot-note). He also remarks, "Both Plato

and Aristotle—no less than Socrates—conceive 'well-doing' to be the primary constituent of 'well-being.' " (*Ibid.*, p. 48, foot-note.)

Similarly, Mayor remarks with regard to Aristotle who is believed to be the founder of Eudæmonism : "As to Aristotle's general conception of Ethics, is he to be called a Eudæmonist ? So it has often been said, because he makes *eudæmonia* the end to which man's life and actions should be referred. But the well-being and well-doing which constitute the eudæmonia of Aristotle are carefully distinguished from any form of pleasurable sensation. Eudæmonia with him is a particular kind of putting forth of the powers of the soul, which is good by itself, quite apart from the pleasure which, as a matter of fact, attends it like its shadow. Virtuous activity does not become good because it is a means to pleasure ; it is good, as being itself the end we should aim at. We admire it in and for itself, as we admire a beautiful statue. This view is, of course, very far removed from the Epicurean and also from the modern utilitarian. * * The end is neither pleasure to self, nor pleasure to others, but the perfect fulfilment of the *ergon* (*i. e.*, proper work or function) of man. And to know what this perfect fulfilment is, we must fall back on reason embodied in the judgment of the wise man." (Ancient Philosophy, pp. 126, 127.)

We see, then, that Aristotle makes an ideal well-being or welfare the end of life, and this implies self-realisation accompanied by a feeling of satisfaction or bliss. It is through the continued and undisturbed exercise of reason that we ennoble ourselves and attain our true well-being. True happiness is the concomitant of the perfect realisation of the true or rational self.*

* Both Plato and Aristotle assert the distinction between rationality and sensibility. Though Plato condemns sensibility as irrational, he yet describes virtue as essentially a harmony of all human powers—a com-

The most distinguished eudæmonist in modern times was Hegel, and the ethical thought of the Neo-Hegelian writers shows a more or less eudæmonistic tendency. More recently, Prof. James Seth and some other Idealistic writers have revived the term 'Eudæmonism' and have fully worked out the theory. These writers seem to take both perfection of nature and the feeling of satisfaction to be the elements of the moral standard. Thus, according to them, feeling is an integral or essential part or element of the standard. The highest good, they say, consists in a synthesis of perfection and satisfaction, rationality and sensibility. Prof. Seth, for instance, speaks of happiness or the feeling of satisfaction as the "index or criterion of moral progress." He clearly distinguishes extreme Hedonism, extreme Rigorism or Rationalism and Eudæmonism in the following words : "Every ethical theory might claim the term 'self-realisation.' The question is, what is the self? Or which self is to be realised? Hedonism answers, the sentient self; Rationalism, the rational self; Eudæmonism, the total self, rational and sentient." (Ethical Principles, p. 198).

Hence a distinction is popularly drawn now-a-days between pure Perfectionism and Eudæmonism in the following way :—According to the former, perfection or moral excellence is the end and standard ; but the feeling of satisfaction or happiness which is its invariable concomitant is not exactly a part of the standard ; according to the latter, both perfection of nature and the feeling of satisfaction or happiness are the co-ordinate elements of the moral standard.

plete life in which every part of human nature, the lowest as well as the highest, should find its due scope and exercise, all in subjection to the supreme authority of reason. Aristotle, though he re-asserts the Platonic distinction of the rational and irrational, conceives of man's virtuous life as a full-orbed life, which, while it is in accordance with right reason, embraces sensibility as well. To both Plato and Aristotle, however, the ideal life is the life of pure reason.

Hence Eudæmonism is often described as the "Happiness Theory" or the "Blessedness Theory" as distinguished from Hedonism or the "Pleasure Theory"*

But it is hardly necessary to distinguish between Perfectionism and Eudæmonism in this way. When Prof. Seth speaks of the "realisation of the total self, rational and sentient" as the moral end, he does not mean to say that rationality and sensibility are of co-ordinate rank in our moral life. He expressly says that "sensibility must obey, not govern" (*Ibid.*, p. 207). He also points out that "while self-realisation brings self-satisfaction, the former is not to be regarded as instrumental to the latter." Thus his theory is substantially the same as the theory of Perfectionism explained in § 2 of this chapter.

§ 4. Interpretation of certain Idealistic maxims.

(*a*) *Be a person.*† This Hegelian maxim means : "Realise your true self or personality." To use the words of Prof. Seth, it means : "constitute, out of your natural individuality, the true or ideal self of personality." Virtue consists in subordinating the 'false self' or 'individuality' to the 'true self' or 'personality'. In this connection the Hegelian distinction between *individuality* and *personality* should be explained. It is said that "the animal, as well as man, is an individual self—a self that asserts itself against other individuals, that excludes the latter from its life, and struggles with them for the means of its own satisfaction. Man is a self in this animal sense of selfhood ; he is a being of impulse, a subject of direct and immediate wants and instincts which demand their satisfaction, and prompt him to struggle with other individuals for the means of such satisfaction." But

* See page 156, for the distinction between 'pleasure' and 'happiness'. See also Dewey, Psychology, p. 298 ; Seth, Ethical Principles, pp. 209, 210 ; Muirhead, Elements of Ethics, p. 105.

† This maxim, in its complete form, is stated thus : "Be a person and respect others as persons." See Outlines of General Philosophy, Sixth edition, p. 284.

man is more than an animal—more than a mere 'individual'; he is a rational person—a self-conscious spirit capable of controlling the impulses. This peculiarly higher human selfhood is called 'personality' as distinguished from the lower or animal selfhood of mere 'individuality.' Individuality separates us; personality unites us with our fellows. However much we may differ in our individuality, yet in our deepest nature—in our rational personality—we agree with one another.

Hence the true interpretation of the maxim is, "control and organise your animal instincts—your appetites, passions and desires in such a way as to make them the means for the realisation of your true self or personality."

(*b*) *Die to live.* It will be easy now to understand the true significance of this Hegelian ethical maxim. It means that man's *higher or spiritual life* is attained through the *death of his lower life*, *i.e.*, through the transformation of his lower impulses (See pp. 201, 202 & 214). "The true interpretation of the maxim," says Caird, "is that the individual must die to an isolated life, *i.e.*, a life for and in himself, a life in which the immediate satisfaction of desire as his desire is an end in itself—in order that he may live the spiritual life, the universal life which really belongs to him as a spiritual or self-conscious being." (*Hegel*, Blackwood's Philosophical Classics, p. 213). As Prof. Seth observes, "I must crucify the flesh (the Pauline term for the natural, impulsive, and sentient or unmoralised man), if I would live the life of the spirit. I must lose my lower life, if I would find the higher.* * Each selfish impulse must be denied, or brought under the law of the life of the total rational self. The 'everlasting Nay' of self-sacrifice precedes and makes possible the 'everlasting Yea' of a true self-fulfilment. The false, worthless, particular, private, separate self must die, if the true self, the rational personality, is to live." (Ethical Principles, p. 207).

NOTE ON THE METAPHYSICAL BASIS OF IDEALISTIC ETHICS.

It has been remarked above that the theory of Perfectionism that has been worked out in Section 2 is based on the ethical teaching of Hegel and the Neo-Hegelians. We may here briefly explain the metaphysical theory of the world and soul that underlies their ethical teaching. Green expresses the substance of Hegel's teaching in the following words:—"There is one spiritual self-conscious being, of which all that is real is the activity or expression; we are related to this being, not merely as parts of the world which is its expression, but as partakers, in some inchoate measure, of the self-consciousness through which this spiritual being at once constitutes and distinguishes itself from the world, and this participation is the source of morality and religion." This implies that the world is the product of a single Absolute and Infinite mental power and that the human mind is a finite or partial reproduction of it and a participator in its nature. Hence we get the peculiar characteristics of man. He is a part of nature, and yet, in a sense, above nature. He is an animal, and yet he is more than an animal. He is not only limited by space and time, but also, in a sense, above and beyond them. Thus there is an element of contradiction in human nature. The struggle to overcome this contradiction—the endeavour after the realisation of our higher self—is the basis of morality. Morality implies the impulse to transcend our animal nature—to be *actually* what we feel we are *potentially*.

Hence self-realisation, in which our highest good consists, means the progressive realisation of our higher self—the realisation of the divine nature that is implicit in human nature—"the realisation of God in man." (See pp. 33, 34).

We see, then, that, since the finite mind is an imperfect reproduction of the Universal Mind, its self-realisation consists in making itself a more and more adequate reproduction and copy of the Universal Mind. Hence our duty is to reject whatever tends to obstruct our self-realisation in this sense. We must rationally regulate our animal instincts—we must transcend the limitations imposed by space and time and identify ourselves with others before we can promote our true being

and secure beatitude. (See General Philosophy, 6th Edition, pp. 230-231).

NOTE ON THE VALUES OF THE PRINCIPAL ETHICAL THEORIES.

It has often been remarked that "each of the principal ethical theories has contributed some valuable element to the whole of ethical thought." We may here briefly explain the statement.

Let us first consider the theory of Hedonism. In the first place, it has persistently urged the claim of sensibility and has, in spite of its exaggeration, prepared the way for assigning to pleasure its true place in moral life. In the second place, it has never dogmatically accepted the established moral ideas and principles, but has always demanded and attempted their explanation. It is true, no doubt, that the explanation offered by Hedonism has been wrong. Still, this much may be said in its favour that it has kept alive the philosophic spirit in dealing with an important matter. Egoistic Hedonism holds that happiness of the self is the moral end. There is an element of truth in this theory—in this sense that self-realisation, which is the true moral end, involves or brings with it happiness of the self. Altruistic Hedonism, again, which makes "the greatest good of the greatest number" the moral end, involves an element of truth ; for the individual, in order to promote his own good in the highest sense, must aim, not so much at his personal good, as at the common good. Evolutional Hedonism, again, in its view that society is an organism, is an improvement upon Non-evolutional Hedonism. It also emphasises the reciprocity of the individual good and the common good.

Rigorism, again, has an important element of value. It points out that reason has the supreme place in human constitution. By bringing reason to the foreground as the essential quality of man, it helps him to rise above the solicitations of the senses. By eliminating all considerations of personal pleasure and pain from the notion of duty and by encouraging the spirit of self-sacrifice, it has done an important service to morality.

Finally, Eudæmonism incorporates into itself whatever elements of truth are found in the other theories.

CHAPTER XVI.

MORAL OBLIGATION.

§ 1. Whenever we judge an action to be right on our part, we judge at the same time that we are under an *obligation* to do it, or that it is our *duty* to do it, or that we *ought* to do it. In other words, the judgment of rightness is accompanied by that of obligation or duty. As Kant says, there is no meaning in *right* unless it involves the *ought*. We cannot know what is right without knowing that it is obligatory or binding on us. (See pp. 5, 6, also p. 61 of this book).

Hence the problem of the nature and ground of obligation is a fundamental problem of Ethics. What is the nature of moral obligation? Why are we *bound* or under an *obligation* to do what we judge to be right, and to avoid what we judge to be wrong? What makes certain actions *obligatory* or *binding* on us? How are we to explain the *sense of duty*? Ethics, as the science of morality, has to answer such questions.

§ 2. Different theories of obligation.

The above questions can be best discussed in connection with the different theories of the moral standard. Hence—

1. We have first to consider the view of moral obligation implied in the *legal* theories. According to these theories, moral obligation is created by external law or command—political, social or divine. The same law that makes an action right also makes it obligatory or binding upon us. "It is external will and command that makes actions to be right; and it is external will and command also that supplies the reason and motive why we should do them—in other words, supplies the binding or impelling force". The laws are enforced by means of rewards and punishments.

Hence, according to the legal theories of right and wrong, the motive-force of obligation—that which prompts us to do

what is right and avoid what is wrong—will consist simply in fear of punishment and hope of reward.

Criticism. The legal theories destroy the very essence of morality which consists in free obedience to self-imposed law. They substitute self-interest for morality, prudence for virtue. (See pages 18, 24, 135).

We see, then, that the legal theories must be rejected. "As the real and ultimate ground of moral rightness must be sought somewhere else than in external command, so the motive or binding force of obligation must be sought in something other than the rewards and punishments attached to commands."

II. We now proceed to consider what views of obligation are implied in the *Hedonistic* theories.

(*a*) The view of obligation assumed or implied in the *Egoistic system.*

According to this theory, self-love is the ultimate source of obligation. A person will feel himself bound to obey the moral rules only as means towards his own pleasure or happiness—*i. e.*, in so far as they are conducive to his own happiness. "He will be just, honest and benevolent only in so far as it is for his own interest to be so—only in so far as justice, honesty, benevolence and the like are the best policy." Thus, according to this view, with every person, the impelling and deterring force of obligation will consist simply in the hope of the good and the fear of the evil that may result to himself as consequences of his own actions.*

But as Egoism is untenable, the theory of obligation implied in it is also rejected. (See pp. 153-156 for a general criticism of Egoism).

* The Egoists accordingly maintain that the obligatoriness of right-doing depends on what are called the *political, social, natural,* and *religious sanctions.* See page 161, *foot-note.* See also Chapter XVIII.

(*b*) The view of obligation assumed in *Altruistic Hedonism*.

According to this form of Hedonism, the impelling and deterring force will be supplied by *sympathy* or *social feeling*. It is this which prompts us to do good to others and prevents us from harming them. But, as we have seen before, such sympathy for the pleasures and pains of others may be outweighed by one's own pleasures and pains. Hence many Hedonists maintain that the internal binding power of sympathy must be supplemented by the binding power of external sanctions (political and social rewards and punishments). As Mill himself admits, "Undoubtedly the sanction of conscience has no binding efficacy on those who do not possess the feelings it appeals to, and sympathetic feeling in most individuals is much inferior to their selfish feelings and often wanting altogether. On them morality has hold but through the external sanctions." Dr. Bain, too, tries to account for obligation by reference to external enforcement.

But it is easy to see that this is really falling back on Egoism which the altruistic writers pretend to reject.*

III. We now come to the *Intuitional* account of obligation. According to this view, rightness and wrongness are qualities inherent in the very form and nature of actions and are discerned intuitively ; and the very fact that an act is right makes it obligatory. In other words, the relation of obligatoriness to rightness is an analytical one, and an act is obligatory simply because it is right. As the rightness of an act lies in its very nature, and no external command is necessary to make it right, so its obligatoriness rises out of its very nature and is altogether independent of any external command, reward and punishment. In fact, "rightness and obligatoriness are only two names for, or only two aspects of, the same thing, or only two correlative qualities such that one cannot be without the other."*

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* **See p. 161, also pp. 166-167 of this book for a general account and criticism of the Utilitarian theory of obligation.**

But here the question arises: How do we become conscious of the essential obligatoriness of a right act? How does it make itself *felt* by us? According to most Intuitionists, obligatoriness of right conduct makes itself felt by us and becomes therefore a mental motive-force in and through moral sentiments. The intuitive cognition of the essential rightness of an action before its performance produces in our minds a feeling of liking or preference for the action, tending to constrain us to identify ourselves with that act. "The consciousness of obligation is grounded ultimately in intellectual intuition and apprehension of what is right or good, but this conception of what is good affects the whole system and thereby rises into emotion and desire and thence into self-determination and volition." Thus, according to Intuitionalism, moral obligation depends wholly on intuition of inherent rightness and the sentiments rising therefrom.

The above is a general account of the intuitional view of obligation. But Dr. Martineau, who is also an intuitionist, holds a slightly different view. According to him, "the obligation which rises *analytically* out of the rightness of conduct, is not sufficient of itself, but requires to be supplemented *synthetically* by the binding and impelling force of personal command, supported by rewards and punishments." He tries to explain the theory in the following way. The cognition of rightness involves in it a cognition of obligation. But this consciousness of obligation necessarily carries with it the idea of and belief in a superior personal being to whom the obligation or duty is due and to whom we are responsible for its performance—and from whom, therefore, we are liable to receive reward or punishment according to our merit or demerit. Now, who is the person to whom the obligation is due and to whom we are responsible? That person cannot be any of our fellow-beings whose knowledge, power and life are limited. It must be an omniscient and omnipresent being, *i. e.*, God. (See pages 25, 26.)

IV. We have next to consider the view of obligation implied in the *Idealist system* (*Perfectionism or Eudæmonism*). According to this view, the conviction and feeling that it is necessary for us to act in this particular way if we want to attain the highest perfection of our being, constitute the ground of moral obligation. In other words, "what makes us feel under an obligation to act so and so will be the cognition, conviction and feeling that it is necessary for us to act so if we are to fulfil the requirements of our nature—to realise the potentialities of spiritual life and worth which are latent in it ; and that failure to act so will be to the detriment of our own essential nature, and therefore of our highest good."*

Thus the motive-force of obligation will be the desire which every rational being will naturally have to realise what he discerns to be his highest good—*viz.*, the highest perfection of his nature. The realisation of the ideal of perfection is felt by man as his supreme need. No external sanctions are necessary to make right conduct obligatory. "It is the very essence of moral duty," as Green rightly points out, "to be imposed by a man upon himself."

The Idealistic view of obligation that has been explained before is justified by metaphysical considerations. We have seen before that human soul is a finite and partial reproduction of the Infinite Mind. In other words, the self in man is essentially the same self that makes the existence of the world possible, but *it is not realised.* Hence man has an inborn tendency and impulse in him to realise his self—to realise the Divine nature that is implicit in his nature—to become *actually* what he is *potentially*. We may be ignorant of the fact that we are reproductions or reduplications of the absolutely perfect being or God, but this ignorance does not

* **Prof. H. Stephen, First Principles of Moral Science.**

quench our thirst to gain perfection. We feel that we *should* perfect our nature or realise our selves. We lay upon ourselves the injunction to realise our eternal perfection.

Thus, according to this view, obligation does not owe its origin to any external source, but springs from within the self, or, in other words, obligation is *self-imposed*. "The *ought* of duty," says Prof. Mackenzie, "is not a command imposed upon us from without. It is the voice of the true self within us. Conscience is the sense that we are *not ourselves*; and the voice of duty is the voice that says, 'to thine own self be true'." But if moral obligation is self-imposed, it is, in a sense, imposed by God upon man. For, as has been said before, the self of man in its essential nature—his true, rational, self—is a reproduction of the Divine or Universal Self. Hence it is the same thing to say that obligation is imposed by God upon man as to say that it is self-imposed.

It should be stated in this connection that the general truth that we are bound or under an obligation to do what is right and avoid what is wrong, is often expressed by saying that we are subject to *Moral law*. By the word *law* here we do not mean anything imposed by an external power, but what is required by our own essential nature.

We conclude, then, that the real seat of moral authority is the ultimate nature of man as man—his true or rational self—which is a reproduction of the Divine personality.

NOTE ON SPENCER'S THEORY OF MORAL OBLIGATION.*

It has been pointed out before that Dr. Bain explains obligation by reference to political and social enforcement. Spencer, too, supports this view, as modified by his doctrine of heredity. He remarks, "To the effects of punishments inflicted by law and public opinion on conduct of certain kinds, Dr. Bain ascribes the feeling of moral obligation. And I agree with him to the extent of thinking that by them is generated the sense of compulsion which the consciousness of duty includes, and which the word obligation indicates." (Data of Ethics, p. 126).

He believes, however, that "the sense of duty or moral obligation is transitory, and will diminish as fast as moralisation increases." "The observation is not infrequent that persistence in performing a duty ends in making it a pleasure; and this amounts to the admission that while at first the motive contains an element of coercion, at last this element of coercion dies out, and the act is performed without any consciousness of being obliged to perform it." (*Ibid.*, p. 128).

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* *Vide* Ch. XII, p. 185 and p. 189 of this book. See also Appendix B, Moral theory of Spencer and other evolutionists.

CHAPTER XVII.

MERIT AND DEMERIT.

§ 1. Meaning of the terms.

Moral *merit* consists essentially in the increase of worth or comparative perfection which every right action evinces in the self. *Demerit*, again, consists essentially in the degradation and loss of worth which every wrong action implies in the essential nature of the self. In other words, merit expresses elevation of the self to a higher level, and demerit, its degradation to a lower level. Every good action brings the agent nearer ideal excellence or perfection and thus increases the worth of the agent. This fact is expressed by saying that the action gives him *merit*. Every wrong action removes the agent farther from the realisation of the ideal good and thus lessens or diminishes the worth or excellence of the agent. This fact is expressed by saying that it adds to his *demerit*. Thus merit consists in the worth or excellence of the agent's nature and especially in the acquisition of additional worth —in progress towards that self-realisation which is the highest good.*

* Prof. Paul Janet explains very clearly the nature of merit and demerit in the following words :—"I give the name of *merit* to the voluntary increase of our interior excellence, that of *demerit*, to the voluntary diminution of this excellence. It is a sort of moral rise and fall in stocks, to borrow a financial term. The moral worth and value of man is an effect which, like economic values, may rise and fall, doing this purely by the will. He who does right gains in value ; he has merit ; his action is meritorious. He who does wrong loses merit ; his action is one of demerit." "Demerit is not merely the absence or lack of merit. The absence of merit consists in doing neither good nor evil, which is the case in indifferent actions. Demerit is not a simple negation, a defect, a lack ; it is, so to speak, what is called in mathematics a negative quantity, which is not a mere nothing ; for a *debt* is not merely a *not having* ; a *loss* is not merely a *non-acquisition*. These are minus quantities. Demerit is, then, a minus merit, a real loss, a diminution." (Theory of Morals, p. 449).

§ 2. **Degrees of merit and demerit.**

A question arises in this connection : How or by what criterion are we to judge merit and demerit ?

Now, it may be generally laid down that merit is directly proportionate to the amount of egoistic interests and temptations overcome for the sake of duty; and that demerit is inversely proportionate to the egoistic interests and temptations yielded to. This statement evidently implies that moral merit will be greater in proportion to the greatness of the difficulties overcome. If a person performs a right action in the face of a strong temptation, it is obvious that his act will be more meritorious than if his temptations were very slight. Again, demerit will be the greatest when self-interests or temptations will be the least, because this shows a more perverted nature—one that is easily turned from good to evil. In fact, it may be said that the stronger the temptation overcome, the greater the merit ; the weaker the temptation yielded to, the greater the demerit. Thus they are to be measured by the strength of temptation overcome or yielded to.

Kant and Martineau maintain that merit is proportionate to the strength of the internal passion overcome. They hold that merit and demerit are to be measured by the strength of evil passions overcome or yielded to ; and *that person* "has the greatest moral merit whose evil desires and passions are the strongest, but who has at the same time strength of will to overcome them from reverence for moral good."

But this would lead to the paradoxical conclusion that evil passions must always be present before we can attain merit, and that the most meritorious life is that in which there is constant conflict with and victory over strong evil passions. Consistently with this view, there will be little or no merit in doing good to our neighbours out of love ; and that we shall have the greatest merit if we hate them all the

time that we do them good. To earn moral merit, we must hate them and do them good in spite of our hatred. (See pages 204-205).

It is true, no doubt, that the resisting of evil passions is meritorious as showing the moral progress of the self. Still it must be admitted that being superior to such desires and passions is more meritorious, as it evinces moral development already attained. The most exalted moral stage is not that in which the evil passions are still strong, but that in which they have been already completely subdued.

§ 3. A distinction is generally made between determinate and indeterminate obligations or duties, and it is said that the merit of performing indeterminate duties is much greater than the merit of performing determinate duties. There are two classes of actions. On the one hand, we have such actions as these :—payments of debts, performance of office-work, and the like ; on the other hand, we have such cases as the following : sacrifice of money, health and life in the hope of saving the lives of others. The former are called determinate, the latter, indeterminate. Now, there is this distinction between these two classes of actions. In the former class, there is some contract, explicit or understood, which, if violated, would subject the agents to social and political punishments. In such cases, therefore, the moral motive is supplemented by a prudential one. But this is not true with regard to the latter class of cases. Hence there is much more merit in performing actions of the latter class than in performing actions of the former class. Conversely, there is not so much demerit in avoiding indeterminate duties as in avoiding determinate duties. If a person pays up his debts or fulfils his contract, we do not say that he has much merit. Again, if a person jumps into a river to save a child from the jaws of a crocodile, we say that his action is highly meritorious, but if he refrains from doing so, he is not supposed to have much demerit. (See Appendix B).

CHAPTER XVIII.

Moral Sanctions.

The term *sanction* means what makes a course of action binding. Moral sanctions mean all those influences which serve to enforce obedience to moral laws. They are the pleasures and pains operating as motives for moral conduct.

Now, the sanctions of conduct are either (*a*) *external* or (*b*) *internal*. By external sanctions are meant the rewards and punishments, pleasures and pains, imposed on a person from without. They include (i) political sanctions, *i.e.*, the penalties imposed by the state, *e. g.*, fine, imprisonment, banishment, execution ; (ii) social sanctions—*i. e.*, social rewards and punishments—*e. g.*, public esteem, praise, honour, on the one hand, and dishonour, shame, excommunication on the other ; (iii) physical or natural sanctions—*i. e.*, the beneficial and injurious effects on bodily health, strength, and length of life—the physiological consequences of good and bad conduct ; (iv) religious or theological sanctions—*i. e.*, the rewards and punishments imposed on men—in this world or in the next—by God Himself for their good and evil deeds. The internal sanction means the happiness and misery imposed on a person by his own conscience—the pleasure of self-approbation and the sting of remorse. (See p. 161, footnote).

It may be stated in this connection that it is Mill who distinguishes between external and internal sanctions. Bentham gives us the first four forms of sanctions enumerated above, and Mill characterises all of them as external. The true sanction of morality, according to Mill, is an internal one—"a feeling in our own minds, a pain more or less intense, attendant on a violation of duty, which in properly cultivated moral natures rises, in the more serious cases, into shrinking from it as an impossibility." (Utilitarianism, p. 41).

This painful feeling is essentially connected with the social feelings which constitute the basis of morality. Thus, according to Mill, the painful experience which results from the performance of what is wrong is the true moral sanction deterring a man from wrong-doing.

We have seen before that the Utilitarian writers derive the notion of duty or obligation from the sanctions. But they thereby destroy the very essence of morality. An action prompted by these sanctions is *not* a right action, or an action done in the right spirit "The man who requires to be prompted to do a right action by bribes or threats, is by no means a good man." (See pages 161 and 166).*

We have distinguished above between internal and external sanctions The internal sanctions are otherwise called *subjective*, and the external sanctions, *objective*. It should be borne in mind that all sanctions are, in a sense, *internal* or *subjective*, because they all refer to the agents' sentient experiences. We know that the pleasurable feeling of self approbation and the painful feeling of self condemnation are internal sanctions, and the rewards and punishments attached to external laws are external sanctions. But the impelling forces of rewards and the repelling forces of punishments appeal only to the agents' feelings. Thus even the external sanctions are reducible to subjective experiences or feelings of pleasure and pain, happiness and misery As Bentham says, "The pain or pleasure, which is attached to a law, forms what is called its sanction". There is, therefore, no essential difference between internal and external sanctions. It may be added here that moral sanctions (in the wider sense) mean all the sanctions (internal and external) mentioned above ; but in the narrower sense the expression 'moral sanction' implies Mill's internal sanction. The so-called sanctions of morality fail to account for our moral nature. Writers like Hobbes, Bentham, Mill, Bain, and Spencer reduce morality to self-seeking. (See Ch. X, XI, XVI, and Appendix B).

CHAPTER XIX.

THEORIES OF REWARD AND PUNISHMENT.

§ 1. In the previous chapter it has been observed that external sanctions include rewards and punishments. In the present chapter we proceed to consider the different theories that have been held with regard to the distribution of reward and punishment.

(*a*) *The Retributive Theory.* This theory explains reward and punishment by reference to the sense of justice. The supporters of this view maintain that, if reward and punishment are to be effective, they must appeal to the moral sense of mankind and be administered on the eternal and immutable principles of equity and justice. Punishment is to be conceived as the vindication of the majesty of the universal moral law by letting the results of a man's evil deeds return upon himself in the shape of pain.

The Retributive theory, again, assumes two forms :—

(i) *Rigoristic* and (ii) *Mollified.*

(i) According to the former, punishments are to be inflicted according to the character of the offences—*i. e.*—according to their gravity or triviality, without taking into consideration the extenuating or mitigating circumstances connected with individuality or environment. In other words, an offence is to be judged abstractly, without any consideration of the peculiarities of the case. Serious offences require severe punishments; and trivial offences, light punishments.

(ii) According to the latter, the mitigating circumstances connected with the individuality and environment of the offender should be carefully considered in administering justice. It must not be forgotten that a crime is always relative to the concrete personality and circumstances of the

criminal. Thus punishment should be modified according to the peculiarities of a case. If, for instance, it is found out that the strain on the will of the criminal has been very great, there is an extenuating circumstance, and the penalty should accordingly be modified.

(b) *The Preventive, Deterrent or Exemplary Theory*. According to this view, the object of the punishment inflicted upon an agent for an offence is to prevent or deter others from committing similar offences. In other words, the offender is punished in order that others may not commit similar offences. Thus the sole aim of punishment is the prevention of crimes. This view is based exclusively on the principle of utility. It is well expressed in the dictum "You are not punished for stealing sheep, but in order that sheep may not be stolen." The defect of the theory lies in the fact that it seems to be hardly just to use a man merely as a means for the good of others—to punish him in order that others may not have the painful experience of undergoing punishments. It is not just that one man should suffer pain, not so much for his own benefit, as for the benefit which others will obtain by refraining from committing similar offences. As Prof. Mackenzie observes, "If this were the sole object of punishment, it seems probable that, with the development of moral consciousness, it would speedily be abolished ; for it could scarcely be regarded as just to inflict pain on one man *merely* for the benefit of others. It would involve treating a man as a *thing*, as a mere means, not as an end in himself."* (Manual of Ethics, p. 404).

* There is another view of punishment according to which the object of punishment is to get rid of the offender so as to prevent him from doing further mischief. This, too, is called 'the Preventive Theory,' though the expression has been used above in a somewhat different sense. It is easy to see that this theory will justify only some forms of punishment, such as transportation. capital punishment.

(c) *The Reformative or Educative Theory* According to this view, the aim of punishment is to educate, reform or cure the offender himself Punishment is inflicted on an offender, in order to *reform or educate* him An individual is not a mere means, he is an 'end in himself.' Hence a punishment inflicted on him should be conducive to his own welfare No person should be punished exclusively for the benefit of others Thus the object of punishment is the reformation of an offender or criminal This seems to be the view commonly accepted now-a-days, as it accords best with the humanitarian sentiments of the age

But though this theory is more satisfactory than the preventive theory, it has its own difficulties It cannot justify the infliction of the penalty of death in any case, and, in fact, many other forms of punishment must be looked upon as ineffective from this point of view. It is a well-known fact that punishment does not always reform an offender A kind treatment may sometimes produce a better effect than punishment—it may be more favourable to the reformation of the offender

§ 2 True theory of punishment

A little reflection shows that the Retributive theory in its mollified form, which explains punishment by reference to the sense of justice, is the most satisfactory one Reward or punishment, to be effective, must be supported by the moral sense of mankind If, on the contrary, it shocks the moral sentiments of mankind, it fails in its purpose and becomes an object of hatred and condemnation That the end of punishment is partly protective or preventive and partly reformative cannot be denied But punishment has at the same time a *retributive* character. It is based on the recognition of demerit in the action. A man has done evil, and it

is just and reasonable that the evil should return upon himself as the wages of his sin.

It should be borne in mind that the Reformative and Preventive theories imply, in a sense, the theory of Retribution. As Prof. Seth observes, "The deepest warrant for the effectiveness of punishment as a deterrent and reformative agent, is found in its ethical basis as an act of retribution. True reformation comes only with the acceptance of punishment, by mind and heart, as the inevitable fruit of the act." In other words, real reformation is only then effected when the offender recognises the punishment to be the just consequence of his act ; and it is this recognition that may lead others to any real abhorrence of crime and thus may effect its prevention.

Thus the Retributive theory is the most satisfactory one ; and it is tenable in its mollified form, according to which we should take into our consideration the extenuating circumstances connected with individuality and environment in administering justice.*

* We have discussed above the principal theories of punishment and have shown that the mollified form of the retributive theory is the most satisfactory, inasmuch as it is consistent with the moral sense of mankind. In this view we find a harmonious combination of the principles of justice and utility, equity and expediency. It may be pointed out in this connection that the original view of punishment prevalent among primitive races was a crude form of the retributive theory. It was too rigoristic and based upon the passion of revenge or vindictiveness. 'Tit for tat' was its principle or maxim. With the development of moral consciousness, this view was modified or rejected.

CHAPTER XX.

Society and the Individual.

§ 1. A little reflection is sufficient to show that moral life presupposes the intercourse of many mental beings in society. We know that our virtues are illustrated in society. As Dr. Sidgwick remarks, "We only know the individual as a member of some society. What we call his virtues are chiefly exhibited in his dealings with his fellows, and his most prominent pleasures are derived from intercourse with them. Thus it is a paradox to maintain that man's highest good is independent of his social relations, or of the constitution and condition of the community of which he forms a part."

Hence Ethics, as the science of morality, has to discuss the question of the relation between the individual and society collective. But the precise relation of the individual mind to society is a question of some difficulty, to which different answers have been given by different schools of thinkers. Two extreme views have been held with regard to this. A brief account of each is given below.

§ 2. **Different theories of the relation of the individual to society.**

I. The *Individualistic* or *Mechanical theory* (*Individualism*). This theory implies that "society is an artificial aggregate of independent individuals, brought together, and made to co-operate by considerations of expediency, but without any necessary connection, or essential dependence on each other." It assumes that society was formed for the common good by the mutual agreement of individuals. This is the theory of the origin of society by a 'social contract' and has been fully explained before. (See pp. 148-149). Hobbes and Rousseau supported this view.

II. The *Collectivistic* or *Organic theory* (*Collectivism, Socialism, Universalism*). This theory recognises the organic nature of society. According to this view, society is an organic system pervaded by one common life, and the individual members are only its organs or limbs. Society is to the individuals what an organism is to its organs. This theory underlies Evolutional Hedonism and Perfectionism or Eudæmonism. (See p. 175, also p. 211).

It is clear from the above that there are two extreme theories, *viz* , Individualism and Collectivism or Socialism. The former makes the individual wholly independent of society, and regards society as an artificial conglomeration of independent individuals, the latter makes the individual wholly dependent on, and subservient to, the collective organic whole called society. We have to avoid both these extremes, though we must admit to some extent the organic nature of society (See § 4).

The theory that the individual depends on society, as an organ on its organism, is justified by the following considerations .—

(*a*) In the first place, it is easy to see that the new-born child inherits everything he has from a previous state of society. In the words of Prof Muirhead, "He owes everything he possesses to a combination of forces and circumstances (national, local and family influences) over which he has had no control " (Elements of Ethics). Empiricists like Locke and others wrongly assume that human mind is at birth like a sheet of white paper—a *tabula rasa* or clean slate, without anything upon it as yet, but ready to be written on—or it is like a lump of soft wax which may be moulded into any shape by forces acting on it from without. The truth is that a child is born with a mass of hereditary, innate and instinctive tendencies, and these are derived from the social life of his

ancestors. Thus the individual, even at birth, is already a product of society.*

(*b*) Again, it is the social environment that contributes most to the mental development of the new-born child. Every individual is subjected from birth to social influence which moulds his mental life. In fact, one of the main conditions which determine the development of the mental power of the individual during his own life-time is the mental influence of the society in which he is born and brought up—the influence of parents, teachers and companions—the influence of example, training and education. The development of his mental life implies that he appropriates the ideas and knowledge of other men and acquires their habits and learns their arts. "He has to think their thoughts, feel their feelings and reproduce their motives and imitate their actions," before he can attain mental development. A very important part is played in the development of intelligence by a common language which is essentially a "social institution." As Prof. Muirhead observes, "In spoken language there is already a store-house of distinctions and generalisations which the child begins by appropriating." Indeed, even for the physical needs of food, clothing and the like, the individual

* As Prof. Muirhead observes, "It was a favourite metaphor with the older individualistic writers to liken the soul of the newly born child to a piece of blank paper on which, by means of education, anything might be written and so a perfectly independent and original character given to the individual. It would be a more apt illustration of its true nature to compare it to a word or sentence in a continuous narrative. The soul comes into the world already stamped with a meaning determined by its relation to all that went before—having, in other words, a context in relation to which alone its character can be understood. It sums up the tendencies and traditions of the past out of which it has sprung—giving them, indeed, a new form or expression, inasmuch as it is an individual, but only carrying on and developing their meaning, and not to be understood except in relation to them." (Elements of Ethics, Book IV, Ch. I, Sec. 64).

has to depend on others. In his infancy he is entirely dependent on others. "The human infant is born in such a state of physical imperfection and utter helplessness, that it must be the constant object of 'tenderness, gentleness, unselfishness, love, care, sacrifice' in order to continue in its merely physical life." Even in his mature life he requires the help and co operation of his fellow-beings.

We conclude, therefore, that the individual is dependent on society. The *innate* elements of his nature are derived from the social life of his progenitors, and the *acquired* elements of his nature are derived from intercourse with his contemporaries. It has been truly remarked that, from his earliest infancy, the child "has been suckled at the breast of the universal ethos." "The individual owes everything that makes his development into an actual and rational moral being possible, to the society in which he is born. Without intercourse with his fellowmen he would be a rational being only potentially, *i. e.*, he would have in him the power of developing into one under certain conditions; but these conditions would be wanting—being mainly action and reaction with other rational beings. The individual can realise his own life only by identifying his life with that of family, profession, city, country and mankind." (Prof. H. Stephen).

§ 3. Relation of great men to society.

The above view of the dependence of the individual on society seems to be refuted by the existence of great men, 'heroes' or men of genius. It is sometimes argued that such men are independent of their times and societies. They seem to make the societies and times in which they live rather than be made by them. It is said that common individuals may be made to be what they are by society, but society itself is made by specially gifted and inspired individuals. To use the words of Prof. Muirhead, "They stand out in solitary independence of the society in the midst of which

they are born. If they have not made themselves, they seem to have been made by God, and to owe little or nothing to their environment. Cæsar, Charlemagne, Napoleon, may thus be proved to have been makers of their social environment instead of having been made by it." (Elements of Ethics) This theory has been worked out fully by Carlyle in his "Heroes and Hero-worship."

But this is an exaggeration. It is true, no doubt, that Nature endows these 'great men' with potentialities higher than those of common individuals. But the development of their potentialities requires conditions and opportunities which must be supplied by the society in which they live and move and have their being. They, too, as Hegel says, have to "suck at the breast of the universal ethos" They, too, have to appropriate the ideas and knowledge of other men and have to learn their habits and arts. Without the help and co-operation of their fellow-men, they cannot produce any good result The circumstances of their times—the thoughts and wants and aspirations of their contemporaries —must be favourable to the development and application of their special kind of genius; otherwise they can do nothing In fact, they are not really the originators of the ideas and sentiments by which they revolutionize society Such ideas and sentiments slowly and silently accumulate in the mental atmosphere, so to speak, and these great men—the leaders of the times—only express them clearly and give effect to them. They are really the representatives of their times—the 'souls of their ages' "They sum up and give expression to the tendencies of the time It is not so much they who act as the spirit of the time that acts in them" "The permanent part of his work was 'in the air' when the great man arrived He was only an instrument in giving effect to it"

§ 4. True view of the relation of the individual to society—idea of a social organism.

The above considerations make it clear that the theory of Individualism cannot be accepted. We must fall back on the theory of the organic nature of society, though we cannot accept it in its extreme form.* For the analogy between physical organism and society should not be pressed too far. In a physical organism the different members or organs have no independent lives of their own. They exist only as means towards the one general life, and have no existence apart from it. But an individual member of society is not wholly a means. As a self-conscious and self-controlled being, he has a relatively independent personal existence of his own, and he thus far exists *for* himself and as an end to himself.

The true view, therefore, is this: The individual in society is at once a means and an end; the individual exists for society, and society exists for the individuals. The society moulds the individual, and the individual in his turn reacts on society. In fact, individual progress and social progress are correlative.

* "It is as true that man is dependent on his fellows as that a limb is dependent on the body. It would be as absurd to ask what would be the properties of a man who was not a product of the race, as to ask what would be the properties of a leg not belonging to an animal, or to ask what would be the best type of man without considering his place in society, as to ask what would be the best kind of leg without asking whether it belonged to a hare or a tortoise." "It is therefore necessary to speak of society as an organism or organic growth which has, in some sense, a life of its own." (Leslie Stephen, Science of Ethics).

Again, Prof. Muirhead, who is an Idealist, observes, "The individual is not less vitally related to society than the hand or the foot to the body. Nor is it merely that each individual is dependent for life and protection upon society, as the hand or the foot is dependent for its nourishment upon the body, but he is dependent on his relation to society for the particular form of his individuality. It is the function it performs in virtue of its special place in the organism which makes the hand a hand and the foot a foot. In the same way, it is his place and function in society which makes the individual what he is."

CHAPTER XXI.

MORAL INSTITUTIONS.

"The life of the individual," as D'Arcy very aptly observes, "is intimately bound up with the institutions of the society to which he belongs, so intimately, that for him most duties take their rise from the position which he occupies in the social system."* Hence an account of the principal social institutions which may be called moral institutions is necessary in an ethical treatise. A brief account of the ways in which they contribute to moral development is given below :—

1. The Family—Every individual is born in a family, so that it is the first moral institution with which the individual comes in contact, and which is best fitted to rear a young mind. As the family is based on spontaneous or natural affection, the child is disinterestedly cared for, and thus his physical, intellectual and moral well-being is promoted. The influence of virtuous and noble-minded parents over their children is well known. Indeed, it has been said that the best men have been moulded by virtuous families. The first lessons of self-sacrifice are learnt in the family.

We have said above that natural affection is the basis of a family. But affection is blind. Hence the defect of home-influence and the necessity of other institutions.

2. Educational Institutions—The university, schools, colleges &c. The sole function of the university as an educational institution is to provide for the physical, intellectual and moral culture of the people. Different schools and colleges which are under its supervision and control are the centres of such culture. That educational institutions of all kinds tend to strengthen the character cannot be denied. The character of individuals is materially moulded in schools and colleges, because in them habits of diligence, self-control, perseverance, obedience, fellow-feeling are fostered or encouraged. The several vices often met with in youths,

* A Short Study of Ethics, p. 194.

such as indolence, negligence, refractoriness, are suppressed. It may be that no direct moral instruction is given in an educational institution. Still indirectly the character is improved through the cultivation of the above virtues.

3. The Church—The influence of religion on the moral convictions of a people is well known. Faith in a moral providence which is inspired by the church strengthens character.

4. The State—It is the guardian of the people, as its duty is to punish vice and encourage virtue, to protect the weak, to regulate education and promote all the legitimate interests of the people. It furthers moral progress by removing opportunities of crime. It is true, no doubt, that the legislation of a state does not *directly* promote morality, for compulsory morality is no morality at all. All real progress is from within outwards and cannot be forced from without. The State can only arrange for the improvement of the *conditions* of the moral life of its citizens by education, by equitable distribution of property, by restraining the criminal, by removing temptations, and the like.

5. Various non-political associations, such as Temperance Associations, Purity Societies &c., contribute to the moral progress of individuals.

All these institutions give opportunities of moral development and prescribe duties for the individual. As D'Arcy says, "As the child grows into consciousness, he finds himself a member of the family, occupying a position which demands definite duties....The family takes the child's moral life into its own life and prescribes his duties. On the side of the child, moralisation proceeds as he learns to identify his life with that of the family, adopting its ideals and doing the duties it demands. With years new relations are formed, and wider horizons become visible by means of larger institutions. The school, the university, the workshop, the office, the church, the state, prescribe new duties, give greater opportunities of individual development, make possible new ideals. By these means all ordinary duties are presented to the individual."

CHAPTER XXII.

Duties and Virtues.

§ 1. *Duties* may be described as the different classes of actions required by moral law. They are the classes of actions which are in conformity with the standard of moral goodness, and therefore morally obligatory. *Virtue*, again, signifies the general disposition or inclination of the self to adapt its action to moral law ; while *virtues* (in the plural) may be defined as the various branches, applications or manifestations of *virtue*, the fundamental disposition.

In fact, the two terms *virtue* and *duty* are two modes of describing the same thing. *Virtue* refers to the inner character and its excellence ; *duty* implies the expression of character in conduct. Right actions may be regarded from two points of view—*subjective* and *objective*. Regarded *objectively*, *i. e.*, as intended external results in accordance with moral law, they are *duties*. Regarded *subjectively*, *i. e.*, as the mental dispositions or inclinations out of which they arise, they are *virtues*.*

Thus virtue and duty are two aspects of the same thing. As Prof. Mackenzie observes, "The term virtue is employed to denote a good habit of character, as distinguished from a duty which denotes rather some particular kind of action which we ought to perform. Thus a man *does* his duty; but he possesses a *virtue*, is virtuous." Similarly, Prof. Dewey writes, "The habits of character whose effect is to sustain and spread the rational common good are virtues ; the traits of character which have the opposite effect are vices." Prof. Muirhead, again, defines virtue as "quality of character that fits for the discharge of duty." In short, virtue signifies an acquired type of character in harmony with moral law.

* Vice implies evil *disposition* or *inclination*. Sin and crime refer to evil *acts*. Sin, however, is wider than crime. Crimes are certain evil and sinful acts, done against society, which are forbidden by the State. An act may be a *sin* without being a *crime*.

§ 2. **Classification of virtues.**

We may classify the virtues according to the different springs of action. Hence—

A. The *self-regarding* virtues and duties :—

The fundamental virtue of this class is *prudence* or *rational self-love* (with self-control). It consists in a proper regard for the interests of the self—a regard for the good of the self in abstraction from the good of others. This fundamental virtue expresses itself in and comprises the following subordinate virtues :

(i) *Courage*—the power of resisting the fear of pain. It is this which enables the self to undergo present pains and dangers for the attainment of greater future benefits and realisation of higher and more permanent ends.

(ii) *Temperance*—the power of resisting the allurements of pleasure. It consists in the power of resisting the impulses of pleasure, especially of the lower kind, which would interfere with the well-being of the self.

(iii) *Industry and perseverance*—the power of resisting the present desires of ease and happiness in order to obtain higher and more permanent good by the exercise of one's own physical and mental powers.

(iv) *Thrift* or *frugality* *

B. The *other-regarding* or *altruistic* virtues. They mean the tendencies of the self to regulate its conduct so as to promote the good of others. They include (*a*) *Justice* or the willingness of giving each man his due. Justice ordinarily means a disposition to secure to every one the products of his own labour and to put no obstacles in the way of the development of his life. It is generally used in the sense of fairness, equity, impartiality. In a wide sense, it comprises all those virtues which have their ground in the idea and feeling of fairness or justice, such as candour,

* It should be borne in mind that the above virtues are not to be wholly confined to the class of the self-regarding virtues, as they are often necessary for the good of others.

gratitude, veracity, fidelity, honesty in our dealings with our fellowmen, uprightness and integrity.

(*b*) *Benevolence,* fellow-feeling or altruistic feeling proper. It has various applications. It assumes different names in different relations of life.

(1) In the first place, we have fellow-feelings arising out of *natural* relations. In other words, we have fellow-feeling towards those to whom we are *involuntarily* related—*i.e.*—"with whom we are naturally and necessarily connected by birth and circumstances," *viz.*, family, community, nation, human race. In such cases, it manifests itself in parental affection, friendship, patriotism, humanity and the like. Thus, "(i) towards the members of our own family--parental affection, filial piety, brotherly love, and so on ; (ii) towards the people of our village, city or district—friendship, public spirit, and so on ; (iii) towards our countrymen generally—patriotism ; (iv) towards our fellow-men generally—humanity, philanthropy."

(2) Secondly, we have fellow-feeling towards those with whom we have entered into *voluntary* relations. Here it shows itself in honour, politeness, loyalty towards the members of our own party, and toleration towards the members of other parties.

C. The *ideal-regarding* virtues will include :

(1) The aspirations towards the intellectual ideal expressing themselves (*a*) in the pursuit of truth and recognised under the names of sincerity, impartiality, concentration and accuracy ; (*b*) in the communication of truth and recognised under the names of veracity and candour ; and, lastly, (*c*) in the application of truth to life and recognised under the names of wisdom and prudence.

(2) Aspiration towards the æsthetic ideal.

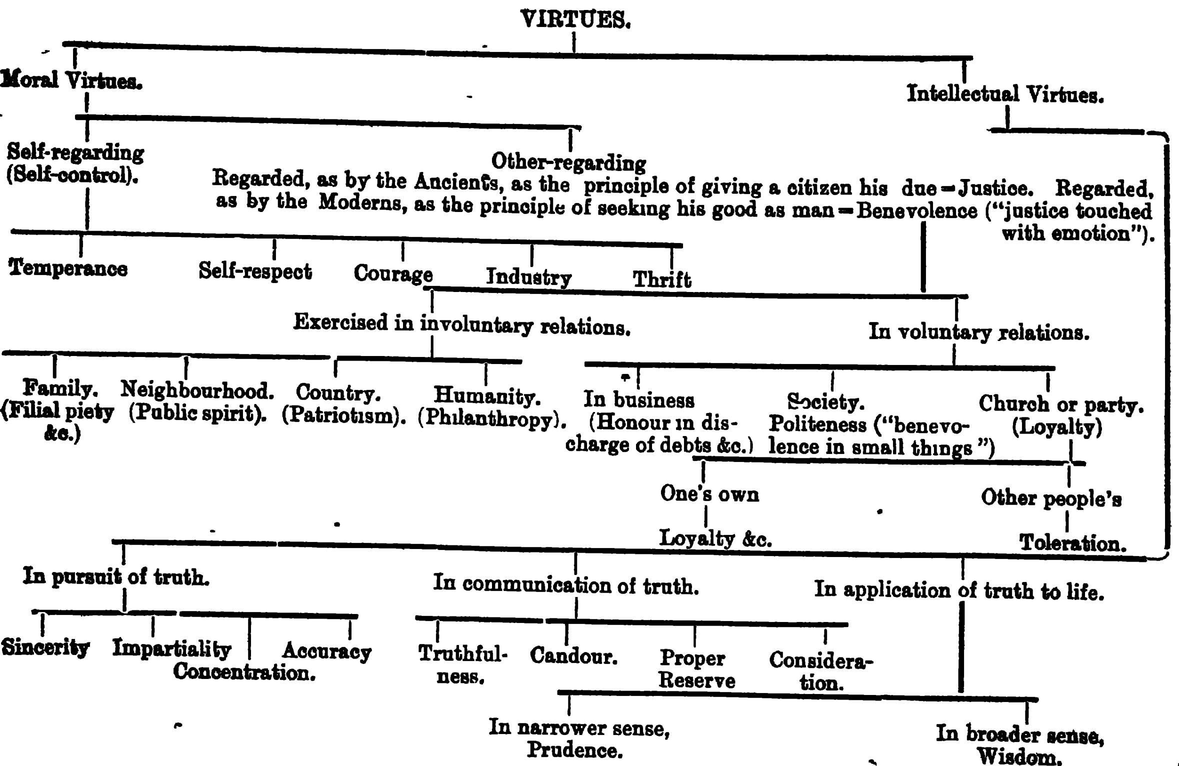
(3) Aspiration towards the moral ideal or ideal of the perfect self, manifesting itself in the love of goodness of nature for its own sake. This is the supreme virtue.

A Table showing the classification of virtues—

VIRTUES

- SELF-REGARDING (prudence, culture, temperance, courage and industry).
- OTHER-REGARDING.
  - JUSTICE.
    - Towards those with whom we are involuntarily and naturally connected—filial piety, parental affection, friendship, patriotism and humanity.
  - BENEVOLENCE.
    - Towards those to whom we are voluntarily related—honour, politeness, loyalty and toleration.
- IDEAL-REGARDING.
  - INTELLECTUAL— Pursuit, communication and application of truth.
  - ÆSTHETIC— Aspiration towards the æsthetic ideal (Loving, preferring and promoting the beautiful).
  - MORAL— Aspiration after goodness.

Prof. Muirhead suggests the following classification of virtues which is substantially the same as the classification given above :



The above is a classification of virtues as well as of duties. It is a classification of *virtues* in so far as we think of the *inward impulses* out of which the actions spring, and of *duties* in so far as we think of the *external results* aimed at.* (See § 1 of this chapter.)

§ 3. Conflict of duties—Perplexity of Conscience.

It is a well-known fact that, at times, cases of perplexity arise when one duty seems to conflict with another—*e.g.*, benevolence with justice or veracity. We know that it is our duty to be just, benevolent, truthful, law-abiding, courteous. But there are times when we feel that the plain guidance of benevolence would lead to injustice. There are times when it appears that law should be defied, politeness disregarded. There are occasions when it is felt that to tell the truth will amount to treachery, or lead to murder. In fact, the various moral principles, such as justice and mercy, benevolence and veracity, may conflict with one another. Duty to the family conflicts with duty to the state, or duty to the church, or duty to God. Which duty is to be done ? The very classification of duties into distinct classes seems to imply that they are mutually opposed and may at times come into collision with one another.

We now understand the true meaning of the so-called 'conflict of duties.' It is sometimes difficult to resolve such conflicts. We often waver between different courses of action that seem to be equally eligible. We are pulled, so to speak, in opposite directions by the rival claims of different moral principles or rules. This is also called 'moral conflict' or 'moral hesitation' or 'perplexity of conscience.' It should

* The classification of virtues and duties given here is based on the classifications given by Prof. Muirhead (Elements of Ethics) and Prof. H. Stephen (First Principles of Moral Science). Similarly, Clarke has classified our duties into (i) those towards God, (ii) those towards self, (iii) those towards others (animals and men). He has evidently adopted our relation to different forms of beings as the principle of classification.

be borne in mind that the expression 'conflict of duties' is not a happy one. There is no real conflict of duties as such. Under every group of circumstances which forms a field of action, there is but one act which is good and obligatory. As Prof. Green remarks, "There is no such thing really as a conflict of duties. A man's duty under any particular set of circumstances is always one, though the conditions of the case may be so complicated and obscure as to make it difficult to decide what the duty really is." (Prolegomena to Ethics, p. 355). Thus it may be said that there is no conflict of duties, properly so called. Rightly understood, a duty is but one under a definite set of circumstances. We should always honestly try to decide questions of duty by reference to concrete circumstances. As Paulsen observes, "The particular case must necessarily be decided by the individual's own insight and conscience, and with a view to the concrete conditions. Morality cannot give him a scheme which shall enable him to settle the matter with mechanical certainty. ' It can merely indicate the general points of view from which the decision is to be rendered." (A System of Ethics, p. 678.)

It may be stated in this connection that 'perplexity of conscience' or 'moral hesitation' arises from various sources. It sometimes arises from the influence of passions and inclinations. These may warp our judgments and lead to confusion or perplexity. If a man is not inclined to help another, he may question the validity of the act. What is called 'self-sophistication' arises from a desire to find excuses for gratifying unworthy inclinations and is a source of 'perplexity.'*

* "A man will pretend to be perplexed with a case of conscience when really he is wishing to make out that some general rule of conduct does not apply to him, because its fulfilment would cause him trouble, or because it conflicts with some passion which he wishes to indulge. Most cases in which we argue that circumstances modify for us the obligation to veracity, are of this kind. When such is the source of

In many cases, perplexity arises because we are unable to understand "the precise character of a situation or the true scope and spirit of moral principles." Perplexity may often arise from the difficulty of referring the particular case to any rule. No law seems to cover it. The circumstances may be so complex that it may seem almost impossible to apply any rule.

How, then, can such cases of perplexity be settled? No definite rules can be laid down with regard to this. Such cases cannot be decided when they are stated in the abstract. But generally when the particular circumstances are investigated, the complexity will disappear more or less. As has been said before, moral problems should be solved by reference to concrete circumstances. We should not seek help from the rules of casuistry,* because such external

perplexity, it is not the most perfect philosophy, the completest possible theory of the moral ideal, that will be of avail for deliverance from it. Just so far as the character is formed to disinterested loyalty to the moral law, however imperfectly the law may be conceived, it will brush aside the fictitious embarrassment." (Green's Prolegomena to Ethics, Book IV, Ch II.)

* See Note at the end of this chapter. Referring to the problem of the solution of moral perplexity, Mr. D' Arcy makes the following remarks:—"The first business of the perplexed mind is to know as simply as possible what the case is. The mere effort to determine this, as simply and in as conscientious a manner as possible, is of itself often sufficient to solve the problem. But if, when the case has been determined as well as the mind can do it, the difficulty still remains, what is to be done? Is help to be sought in casuistry? The answer must be a decided negative. Rules of casuistry are dangerous......There is, however, a rule which, though it is as general as any practical rule can be, has its application to every case, no matter how complicated. And that rule is the ethical principle itself. Let it be kept well in view, and it will give more help than any other. Whether as the golden rule of Christianity, or as that love which sums up all commandments, or as the Kantian rule to treat humanity always in every person as an end withal, and never as a means only, the ethical principle is itself the most potent solvent of doubt.

reference gradually weakens our moral susceptibilities. In our attempt to solve such complicated moral problems, we should rather fall back upon the great fundamental moral law, of which the particular laws are but fragmentary aspects. Now, the fundamental law is: "Realise the rational self." "When the rules come into conflict, and when we feel ourselves in a difficulty with regard to the course that we ought to pursue, we must fall back upon the supreme commandment, and ask ourselves: Is the course, that we think of pursuing, the one that is most conducive to the realisation of the rule of reason in the world?...In general a man who keeps his conscience unclouded, and sets this question fairly before himself, will be able to keep himself practically clear from errors, without resorting to casuistical distinctions." (Prof. Mackenzie, Manual of Ethics). In short, self-realisation is our supreme duty; hence it is in the light of this that we are to find out what course we should follow.

"But it is not to be imagined that by means of this or any other formula there is hope of settling all cases of perplexity. Honest dealing with self and a 'single eye' to the true good are the best means of solving difficulties. But they are the best, not because they provide an infallibly accurate formula, but because they are the means by which will be formed that temper of mind and that ethical tact which are better than any formula.

"...The ability to solve difficulties aright depends, for the most part, not on natural ability or even the conscientiousness of the moment, but on the general tenor of the whole life. Life is an art, and he who desires to excel must learn his skill by practice...The way to solve the moral perplexities of great occasions is to practise morality every day. The way to be good in great things is to be good in little things. The way to know the good when knowledge is hard is to do the good when knowledge is easy." (A Short Study of Ethics, pp. 218-220).

NOTE ON CASUISTRY.

Casuistry means the science or doctrine of cases of conscience. It is the attempt to give definite interpretations of the moral laws, and to ascertain which of them should yield in the case of a conflict. It seeks to interpret the moral principles definitely and indicate exceptions to them and thus to solve doubtful cases of duty. It arose from the attempt of the clergymen to settle for the common people what courses of action should be followed on definite occasions. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries several books of casuistry were written which tried to solve moral difficulties by rules and exceptions. They were books of reference, professing to give answers to all important moral problems.

The foregoing remarks make it clear that the science of Casuistry deals with perplexity of conscience. It is the study which endeavours to frame a body of definite and subtle rules for resolving all conceivable cases of conflict or collision of duties. It aims at codifying and explaining the laws of our moral life in all their details and illustrating them by appropriate examples. It teaches us which of the conflicting principles is to be followed and which of them is to be violated on a particular occasion.

As has been already pointed out, casuistry originated from the attempt on the part of the Church to supply ordinary people with ready-made answers to all possible cases of moral perplexity. Elaborate and subtle systems of casuistry were built up by clergymen in the Middle Ages.

In modern times Casuistry has fallen into disrepute. It is generally admitted now-a-days that the extremely minute and subtle rules laid down by casuists, instead of rendering any real help, often increase the perplexity of our conscience. "The conflict of views and directions in the different manuals of casuistry not infrequently lead men to think that one course of action, supported by one authority, is perhaps as good as another, supported by a different authority." Indeed, the rules of casuistry are dangerous. They sometimes supply men with

excuses for deviating from the path of rectitude. Hence casuistry has often been condemned as 'moral sophistry' or as the 'means of escape through the moral back-door'. It may be added in this connection that the attempt to overcome moral conflict by reference to an external code of casuistry is highly objectionable, as such external reference 'tends to extinguish the inner inspiration and set up an arbitrary authority in its stead'.

We conclude, then, that we should not seek help from the books of casuistry. "These books", as Adam Smith observes, "are generally as useless as they are commonly tiresome." They are usually more or less arbitrary and dogmatic, tending to vitiate our moral life.

The character of casuistry has been very clearly explained by by Prof. Mackenzie in the following words :—

"Casuistry consists in the effort to interpret the precise meaning of the commandments, and to explain which is to give way when a conflict arises. It is evident enough that conflicts must arise. If we are always to respect life, we must sometimes appropriate property—*e.g.*, the knife of a man about to commit murder...Casuistry seeks to draw out rules for breaking the rules—to show the exact circumstances in which we are entitled to violate particular commandments......It was called 'casuistry', because it dealt with 'cases of conscience.' It fell into disrepute, and was severely attacked by Pascal. And on the whole rightly. It is bad enough that we should require particular rules of conduct at all, but rules for the breaking of rules would be quite intolerable. They would become so complicated, that it would be impossible to follow them out; and any such attempt would almost inevitably lead in practice to a system by which men might justify, to their own satisfaction, any action whatever. The way to escape from the limitations of the commandments, is not to make other commandments more minute and subtle, but rather to fall back upon the great fundamental law, of which the particular commandments are but fragmentary aspects." (Manual of Ethics, pp. 339-341.)

CHAPTER XXIII.

GROWTH OF CHARACTER.

§ 1. Character and conduct.

By the expression "character of a person" we mean his peculiar mental and moral constitution which marks him off from other persons. The character of every individual has a history. It is formed through the uniform exercise of will in certain directions. The tendencies and dispositions out of which it is formed are, in part, inherited; but it is really built up by repeated and uniform conduct. We come to possess good or bad characters according as we habitually act in the right or wrong direction. The effects of our acts persist in our character. We are what we make ourselves to be. We may either ennoble or debase our nature. The human self is not a mere product of circumstances; it is not a passive mechanism, but is essentially an active principle; it possesses a regulative rational will-power by which it may rise above the spontaneous inclinations or tendencies, identify itself with and concentrate its whole energy upon those wants and ends which reason approves of as the highest and best, and may thereby determine what its own predominant desires and motives shall be, and through them the direction of its own actions, and thus its own future development. We may, therefore, define character as the form which the mental and moral constitution of a person assumes through his own acts—through repeated and uniform exercise of his different tendencies and faculties in certain directions.*

* The word 'character' is sometimes used in a narrow sense to signify 'good moral character'. Thus, Prof. Sully defines character as "a morally disciplined will, including a virtuous condition of the whole mind, that is, the disposition to think and feel as well as to act in ways conducive to the ends of morality." (Outlines of Psychology, p. 440).

By the term 'conduct', again, we mean voluntary action. Character is manifested or expressed in conduct. Hence conduct may be defined as the outward or external expression of character. It really implies the system of outward voluntary acts expressive of character. As Prof. Mackenzie observes, "It seems best to confine the term conduct to those acts that are not merely adjusted to ends, but also definitely willed. A person's conduct, then, is the complete system of such acts, corresponding to his character". (Manual of Ethics, p. 85.)

It may be stated in this connection that character and conduct act and react on each other. Character determines the nature of, and expresses itself in, outward conduct or action, and such action, again, reacts on and modifies character.

§ 2. **Growth of character.**

Character does not remain fixed and static; it is gradually developed in the life-time of the individual. Due development of character involves—(i) strength of will and habit of self-control; (ii) a wider conception of moral ideal and a better insight into the conditions of duty; (iii) regular performance of the duties of life; (iv) sincerity and earnestness in every work and strict adherence to the path of rectitude.

It should be borne in mind that the influence of society on the development of character is very great. As has been pointed out before in Chapter XX, page 242, social influence contributes much to the development of the mental life of the individual. It is a well-known fact that examples and precepts, social approbation and disapprobation, regulate the conduct of individuals and thereby modify their character. It is true, no doubt, that personal effort is the most indispensable factor in the formation of character. The development of character must be brought about by the free, voluntary activity of the self. Self-perfection is, from the nature of the case, self-realisation. Still it must be admitted that the self is often roused into activity by social influence.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MORAL IDEAL AND MORAL PROGRESS.

§ 1. Meaning of Progress.

The conception of progress has been rendered familiar to us by evolutionist writers The word 'progress' literally means 'going forward' or 'advancing'. Hence it has become synonymous with development or evolution which implies "an advance through successive stages of simultaneous differentiation and unification to ever higher and richer forms of existence". Progress thus signifies a continuous process—a series of changes each of which is a step or stage that necessarily leads to a higher and richer step or stage until the final stage—the goal of the whole series—is reached. It thus consists in a gradual approximation through successive steps to an end—the end being the principle of unity which harmonises and explains the successive steps.

§ 2. Moral Progress and its relation to Moral Ideal

We are here concerned with moral progress. The main question in the concrete moral life of an individual or of a society is the question of moral progress—*i. e.*—the question relating to the proper development of character, individual or national. Our moral life is a progressive life, a life which passes through different stages and guides itself in accordance with a moral ideal. Thus moral progress is regulated by a moral ideal. But the relation between moral progress and moral ideal is one of reciprocity. If it be true that the moral ideal regulates moral progress, it is no less true that the amount of moral progress that is attained reacts on the moral ideal. "Every moral advance tends to raise the moral ideal, which in its turn prompts to more righteous forms of activity and thus tends to give rise to a more elevated type of character."

It should be borne in mind that moral progress implies that man is essentially a moral being, and that the germs of morality are inherent in his nature from the very beginning. Morality cannot arise out of non-moral elements. As Prof. James Seth observes, "Moral progress is morality in progress, 'progressive morality'; never at any stage a progress *to* morality, or a progress from the non-moral to the moral stage. This last form of progress, even if it existed, would have an interest only for the anthropologist, not for the moralist, in whose eyes man is, from the first moment of his existence, potentially, if not actually, a moral being. If man started on his career as a non-moral being, he could never become moral, any more than he could make any intellectual attainments if he were not from the first an intellectual being." (Ethical Principles, p. 318.)

We have briefly explained above the nature of moral progress and its relation to the moral ideal. We may conclude this section by referring to some special characteristics of the law of moral progress. Let us briefly explain them.

(a) Transition from an external to an internal view. The first special feature of moral progress is the gradual change wrought in the standpoint of morality. With the gradual development of moral consciousness, human actions come to be judged more and more from an internal standpoint—*i. e.*—by reference to motives and intentions. The inner character of a person, and not the external consequences of his acts, becomes the true object of moral judgment. Thus, as Prof. James Seth observes, "We can trace in moral progress a gradual transition from an *external* and *utilitarian* to an *internal* and *spiritual* estimate of action, from *conduct* and *consequences* to *character* and *causes*, from *doing* to *being*, from *the action* to *the man*...What the individual *does* counts for less and less, what he *is* counts

for more and more. When it is perceived that certain types of conduct are the expression and result of certain types of character, a higher value comes to be placed upon the inner character than upon the outward deed, and the centre of moral judgment changes from the act to the intention. Virtue or excellence of character is approved, as the sure guarantee of excellent activity; vice or baseness of character is condemned, as the sure prophecy of base activity...Even this, however, is only an intermediate step; and once the emphasis is shifted from conduct to character, the further step is easily taken, and the virtuous character comes to be valued, not merely as the security of the corresponding activity, but for its own sake." (Ethical Principles, p. 333.)

(*b*) *Subordination of the sterner to the gentler virtues.* "A second manifestation of the law of moral progress is found," as Prof. Seth points out, "in the gradual subordination of the sterner to the gentler virtues, of the virtues of being or security to those of well-being or amenity." With moral progress, the gentler and more benevolent virtues obtain the foremost place, while the sterner and more virile are compelled to accept a subordinate position. A higher value is set on sympathy, benevolence, forgiveness, humanity, obedience, gentleness, patience, resignation and the like than upon physical courage and the heroic deeds of the battle-field.

(*c*) *Wider scope of virtue.* The third feature of moral progress is that the scope of virtue is gradually widened. Moral progress implies "a growth from particularism to universalism, from patriotism or nationalism to humanism or cosmopolitanism." With the development of moral consciousness, the individual begins to discover his community of being with his fellows. He discovers that the highest good is a *common* or *universal* good. "As the moral life of man-

kind proceeds, it seems to break down the barriers that divide man from man, the barriers of nationality and race as well as those of birth and occupation "

It has been pointed out in a previous chapter that individual progress and social progress are correlative. Hence, in any account of moral progress, something must be said about these

§ 3 Moral progress in the individual.

We have said something about this in Chapter XXIII, § 2 The moral progress of a person is indicated by the greater facility with which he can control his passions, by his increased sympathy for his fellow-beings, by his stricter adherence to the path of rectitude and by the increased peace of his mind We may here briefly indicate the circumstances which help the moral progress of individuals —

(i) Due cultivation of intelligence Every person should duly cultivate his intelligence to arrive at a clear conception of the moral ideal and a just estimate of duties

(ii) An attempt to control the passions and inclinations, and a scrupulous and steady adherence to what is judged to be right.

(iii) An acute consciousness of one's own shortcoming, and purity and freshness of the moral sentiments

(iv) The study of the lives of saints and heroes, such as Socrates, Buddha Jesus, Nanak, Sri-chaitanya This, too, will expedite moral progress

(v) Influence of good company. "Example is better than precept,' says the proverb We may improve our character by keeping good company and by associating ourselves with men of saintly character that may happen to live in our own times.

It may be stated in this connection that the moral progress of individuals is greatly influenced by social

environment. The moral atmosphere of a community furthers or retards the moral progress of individuals. Society may influence the moral development of individuals either intentionally by means of instruction, or unintentionally through example. (See Chapter XX, p. 242; also Ch. XXIII, p. 259.)

Before concluding this section we may briefly trace the course of moral development in the life of an individual. As is well known, in infancy or babyhood moral consciousness remains dormant. The latent moral nature of an individual gradually unfolds itself with the accumulation of experience. In the first stage of his moral life, he begins to distinguish between moral and non-moral acts, and to judge concrete acts as right or wrong without being clearly conscious of general rules or laws. In this stage, owing to the weakness of his reflective power, the individual is influenced more by the opinions of others than by personal insight and reflection. In the second stage of his moral life, with the development of his reflective power, he becomes conscious of rules as justifying moral acts, though even then he is not quite able to distinguish between positive laws and moral laws. The moral criterion in accordance with which he regulates his conduct more or less spontaneously is usually supplied by the laws, manners and customs of the society to which he belongs. He also begins to see that the inner side of an act is the real seat of moral quality. Later on, with a further development in his reflective power, his individuality begins to assert itself. He now begins to reflect upon and criticise the laws and customs. He begins to inquire "why certain habits are to be followed, what *makes* a thing good or bad. *Conscience* is thus substituted for *custom* : *principles* take the place of *external rules*." Thus the individual becomes conscious of his moral freedom and distinguishes clearly between moral law and external law. He also clearly sees that the inner intention, and not

the external consequence of an act, is the real seat of moral quality. He further understands that he is organically related to society It is in this way that the moral consciousness of the individual is developed; and a developed moral consciousness is implied in moral progress

§ 4 Moral progress in society and the human race.

When we carefully observe the moral progress of any society, we find that the movement is invariably from 'customary morality' to 'reflective morality' This implies that, in a progressive society, the moral independence of the individual and his right of private judgment are recognised and there is a movement from the external to the internal view of morality. Further, we can trace a subordination of the sterner virtues to the gentler ones and a widening of the scope of virtues (See Section 2 of this chapter)

In dealing with moral progress in society, we must not omit to mention that individual progress and social progress are correlative If society moulds the mental life of the individual, the individual in his turn reacts on society. It has been said before that the moral progress of individuals is affected by social influence, and it may be pointed out here that moral progress of a society is determined by the moral insight and culture of its individual members (See Ch. XX) It should also be stated in this connection that, with the moral progress of a society, certain social institutions are developed, which may be called moral institutions. (See Chapter XXI)

An interesting question arises in this connection · Are we justified in speaking of man's real progress in morality? Even many thoughtful writers condemn the present age in spite of all its civilisation They point out to us the dreadfulness of the sins of modern times, of which the primitive races had no idea They draw our attention to the facts that, in these days, the activities of men are, for

the most part, "confined to the sensual and material, to gain, pleasure and show," and that the spirit of contention is very strong. They regret that, in this so-called 'enlightened age', little or no attention is paid to the cultivation of the inner nature of man, and that men are generally disposed to value more the engines of war than the maxims of peace. Many of these writers extol the simple and innocent manners and customs of the men of by-gone ages. Rousseau and his followers speak of the original and ideal "state of nature," a return to which, according to them, is the only means of moral reclamation. Writers like Tolstoi, Channing* and Carlyle† strongly condemn the vices and corruptions of modern times.

* Channing observes, "The vast activity of this age of which I have spoken is too much confined to the sensual and material, to gain and pleasure and show. Could this activity be swayed and purified by a noble aim, not a single comfort of life would be retrenched, whilst its beauty and grace and interest would be unspeakably increased. There is another dark feature of this age. It is the spirit of collision, contention, discord, which breaks forth in religion, in politics, in business, in private affairs: a result and necessary issue of the selfishness which promotes the endless activity of life. The mighty forces, which are this moment acting in society, are not and cannot be in harmony, for they are not governed by Love. They jar; they are discordant. Life now has little music in it. It is not only on the field of battle that men fight. They fight on the Exchange. Business is war, a conflict of skill, management, and too often fraud; to snatch the prey from our neighbour is the end of all this stir. Religion is war: Christians, forsaking their one Lord, gather under various standards, to gain victory for their sects. Politics are war, breaking the whole people into fierce and unscrupulous parties, which forget their country in conflicts for office and power. The age needs nothing more than peace-makers, men of serene, commanding virtue, to preach in life and word the gospel of human brotherhood, to allay the fires of jealousy and hate". (Works, I, pp. 502-503.)

† Carlyle remarks, "Undue cultivation of the outward, though less immediately prejudicial, and even for the time productive of many palpable benefits, must, in the long run, by destroying moral force, which

It cannot be denied that the present age, with all its civilisation, has innumerable defects and drawbacks. It has, however, its own peculiar excellences which should not be overlooked. A study of the history of mankind enables us to see that, on the whole, some progress in morality has been made. When we consider the codes of duty and the ideals of virtue that have grown up among the civilised races—the higher conceptions of conduct that prevail among them—we cannot but admit that there has been some real progress. The principal signs of moral progress, *viz.*, the transition from an external to an internal view of morality, the subordination of the sterner virtues to the gentler ones, and the widening of the sphere of virtues, are discovered in modern times. The intellectual culture and general enlightenment of the age tend to widen the mental and moral horizon. No one can deny that, in the present age, the views of men have generally become more liberal and catholic, their social regulation and distribution of justice more humane and equitable, and their public charities more strict and systematic. All modern

is the parent of all other forces, prove not less certainly and perhaps still more hopelessly, pernicious. This, we take it, is the grand characteristic of our age. By our skill in mechanism it has come to pass that in the management of external things we excel all other ages; while in whatever respects the pure moral nature, in the true dignity of soul and character, we are perhaps inferior to least civilised ages". (Essays, II, p. 111.)

Referring to this question Prof. Mackenzie observes, "If 'new occasions bring new duties,' they also bring new opportunities for vice. Looking, for instance, at the commercial morality of the present time, and comparing it with the practices of more primitive peoples, we have often a difficulty in determining, whether, in the root of the matter, we have advanced or receded. If in some respects our actions seem more trustworthy and based on broader and more reasonable principles, in other respects we have grown more selfish and dishonest than men ever were before". (Manual of Ethics, p. 414.)

civilised societies fully recognise the moral independence of the individual and his right of private judgment. They fully recognise that "humanity in the person of every one is to be treated always as an end, never merely as a means." It is true that they are often far from acting upon it, "but in their conscience they recognise the principle as it was not recognised in the ancient world."* The indications of the growth of a universal human brotherhood are no doubt faint even now, yet it must be admitted that the abolition of slavery, the ardent desire to improve the condition of the 'depressed classes,' the growth of international sympathy, industrial co-operation—all these tend to prove that men are being united more firmly than ever before. "If in the sphere of politics or commerce, industry or war, new instruments and engines have been invented for fraud and destruction, yet, even in these spheres, improved moral ideas have introduced restraints and refinements not conceived before." Some writers are fond of speaking of a 'primitive state of innocence.' But this state of innocence, even if it be believed to have historically existed, is not an ideal state for man. The so-called state of innocence in which no consciousness of guilt exists, is really the state of lower animals. Indeed, the very consciousness that our sins are dreadful shows that our moral ideal has become very high.

We conclude, then, that, in spite of all its defects, the present age is not without its merits, and that there has been some progress in morality.

* Prof. Green, Prolegomena to Ethics, p 288. Cf. D' Arcy: "Now it seems a mere commonplace to talk of the human family or the brotherhood of mankind or the universal fatherhood of God, or to speak of heathen or savage peoples or unbelievers as of persons possessed of rights equally well founded with our own. Yet these commonplaces are a mark of ethical advance more striking, more convincing than perhaps any others which exist." (A Short Study of Ethics, p. 180.)

NOTE ON MORAL PROGRESS.

It has been remarked by a distinguished writer* that "moral progress is, in sum and substance, the progressive discovery of the individual." The statement involves an important element of truth. Moral progress involves the gradual recognition of the moral independence of the individual and the determination of his true place in society. "The trend of moral progress has been in the direction of true Individualism : it has meant the gradual discovery of the place of the individual in the body politic."

The idea of individual moral independence and responsibility has not been attained all at once. History tells us that it is the product of many centuries of moral development. Sir Henry Maine in his well-known treatise on Ancient Law has observed that "the movement of progressive societies has hitherto been a movement from status to contract." "The individual is steadily substituted for the family as the unit of which civil laws take account." This implies that, in primitive societies, the rights of the individual are not at all recognised. Law does not take account of him. The life of the individual is identified with that of the family, group or tribe. It is only gradually that the individual has been recognised as a separate and responsible agent and made the subject of legal rights and obligations. In the recognition of the individual's power of contract, we find the first clear recognition of the individual as a separate and responsible agent Now, in moral progress we find something of the kind. The ethical unit of earlier times is the tribe, group or family ; that of later times, the individual. The moral life of the individual is originally identified with that of society. "It is long before the individual emerges from the tribe and the family, from the state and the class, in the completeness and independence of his moral being. And even when the individual has differentiated himself from the larger social whole, it is long before he comes to a true understanding of himself and of

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* Prof. James Seth, Ethical Principles, p. 328.

his relation to society." Thus it is after many centuries of moral development that the individual has come to be recognised as an independent moral being having free, private choice. It should be noted in this connection that morality is at first 'customary.' The individual is guided by the accepted manners and customs of the society to which he belongs without criticising them. Later on, morality becomes 'reflective.' The individual becomes conscious of his right of private judgment and of his true relation to society. The validity of the accepted manners and customs is questioned, and the real basis of moral judgment is investigated.*

* In explaining the growth of moral judgment, Mr. Clifford points out that the savage has what may be called 'a tribal self.' He looks upon himself only as a member of his tribe. Of himself as an independent individual, or of others as independent individuals, he has as yet formed no clear conception. The individual almost instinctively follows those lines of conduct that promote the welfare of the tribe, and avoids those that harm it. (See Mackenzie, Manual of Ethics, Chapter V.)

APPENDIX A.

UNIVERSITY QUESTIONS.

1909.

1. Explain the terms positive, normative and practical as applied to Ethics as a science. Discuss the suitability of each. (pp. 2-4).

2. What are the sciences that Ethics rests upon, and what other sciences depend upon Ethics for part of their data? Explain the relation in each case. [The sciences on which Ethics depends are (i) Psychology, (ii) Metaphysics and (iii) Sociology, while the sciences that are more or less dependent on Ethics are (i) Politics, (ii) Economics and (iii) Pedagogics. Economics means the science of the production and distribution of wealth. The principles of Economics should have a moral basis. Pedagogics which means the science and art of education also comes under the regulation of Ethics. For the relation of Ethics to other sciences named here, see pp. 11-28].

3. Characterise the object and process of moral judgment (pp. 75-82), and distinguish them from the object and process of prudential judgment. (A prudential judgment consists in judging one voluntary action as better than others according to the standard of *utility*. See p. 47; also p. 127).

4. Examine the view that the Freedom of the Will is a postulate of moral judgment (pp. 103-105).

5. Give a classification of the springs of action on a psychological basis. (pp. 89-94). What, in your opinion, is the process by which their place is determined in a well-ordered moral life? (For Dr. Martineau's view and its criticism, see pp. 95-100. In a well-ordered moral life, their place is determined by reference to the moral ideal as revealed by Conscience or Reason. *Reverence* for the moral ideal is the supreme spring which subordinates and regulates all the rest. It prompts us to regulate our other springs—to prefer the right and reject the wrong, tending thus to unify all the activities of life and to make them converge towards one highest good).

6. Is there any place for Conscience as distinguished from Prudence in a system of Hedonism? (pp. 115-117, pp. 128-132).

7. What is the explanation given of moral obligation from the point of view of Evolutionary Ethics? (pp. 185-186; p. 189; p. 280).

8. "Some laws express what is, some what must be, and some what ought to be." Illustrate this. Under which of these categories does Moral Law fall, and how? (See p. 74, footnote. Some laws, *e. g.*, Laws

of Nature, are general statements about what *is*. They state how things *do* happen. These are assertorial laws—"Is-laws". Others, again, say to us : "you *must* do this, and avoid that ; else you shall be punished." They are mandatory or imperative laws—"must be-laws"—dealt with in Politics and Jurisprudence. The moral laws say to us : "you *ought* to do this and avoid that, as rational beings." These are Recommendatory laws—'ought-to-be-laws'). What is the relation of Moral Law to Divine Law and Political Law ? (pp. 23-26 ; p. 17).

9. Explain Bentham's classification of the so-called Sanctions of Morality, and the improvement introduced into it by Mill. (pp. 234-235).

10. Can you distinguish Egoism as a philosophical theory from selfishness in practical conduct ? Is either ethically justifiable ? (Egoism is the philosophical theory that every one ought to seek his own greatest pleasure. In its consistent form, it thus advocates selfishness in practical conduct. Neither the philosophical theory of Egoism nor selfishness in practical conduct is ethically justifiable. See pp. 147-156).

11. Explain fully your idea of an organism. In what sense, and to what extent, is the analogy of an organism applicable to human society ? (pp. 240-243 ; pp. 244-245).

12. Can you give an illustration of a Conflict of Duties ? Can each of the conflicting elements in such a case be properly called a duty ? What is the ethical solution for such a conflict ? (pp. 253-257).

1910.

1. Define and distinguish the meanings of the term 'law' as applied in Natural Science, Jurisprudence and Ethics. (See Ans. to Q. 8, 1909).

2. 'Ethics is the science of the conduct of man as a social being.' Write a brief exposition of this. (p. 14).

3. Discuss the value of the historical method as applied to Ethics, showing the bearing on this of Aristotle's dictum 'First in time and first in the nature of things'. (See pp. 34-35. According to some moralists, the true ethical method is *historical* or *genetic*. Their view is based on the supposition that "to understand any phenomenon is to know its genesis ; and since there is an evolution of morality, the clue to its explanation will be found in the process of its historical development." Ethics, therefore, is a study of the origin of morality. The theory is erroneous, as it confounds the *history* of moral phenomena with the *philosophy* of morality. See also pp. 182-188).

4. What are the main psychological divisions of the mental activities ? Show how by different ethical theories different relative importance is

attached to these. How, in your opinion, ought weight to be laid on each of these divisions ? (Chs. IV, XI, XIV, XV).

5. Why is it necessary for Ethics to have both a psychological and a metaphysical basis ? To what defects are ethical theories liable which neglect either of these ? (pp. 11-12 ; pp. 19-22 ; pp. 85-86).

6. 'Give an account of the nature of the moral judgment, showing wherein it differs from the logical judgment. What are the objects with which it may be said to be concerned, and to what controversy has this led ? State your own opinion on this. (pp. 75-82).

7. Explain what is meant by moral judgment. (p. 75). What, in your view, are the main factors to be considered in a theory of rewards and punishments ? (pp. 286-289).

8. What contributions have the rational and the evolutionist schools made towards the advancement of Ethical science ? How may the study of these theories be said to bear influence on the practical life ? (pp. 120-122 ; pp. 194-208 ; pp. 171-183 ; p. 228).

9. What ethical schools have employed Physical or Chemical analogies in establishing their theories ? (Advocates of Egoism and Individualism, *e. g.*, Hobbes. See p. 240). Why are those analogies to be rejected in favour of the biological analogy ? (pp. 241-245).

10. Give a brief account of the development of the moral law in the life of the individual, describing the various stages through which it passes. (pp. 264-265).

11. How is the existence of the state to be justified ethically ? What are its ethical functions, and wherein ought its action to be limited ? (p. 247 ; see also Ans. to Q. 3, 1913).

1911.

1. What do you understand to be the Scope of Ethics ? (pp. 4-7). Explain its relation to

(*a*) Psychology (pp. 11-13), (*b*) Metaphysics (pp. 19-22).

2. Wherein does an action become moral ? (pp. 40-48). Indicate the place of desire in Ethics. (pp. 49-50 ; also p. 201). Explain 'Universe of Desire', and show its bearing on moral life. (The universe of desire—"The universe to which a desire belongs is the universe that is constituted by the totality of what we call a man's *character*, as that character presents itself at the time at which the desire is felt. It is, in short, the universe of man's ethical *point of view* at the moment in question"),

Or,

Discuss the basis of moral obligation. (pp 224-229).

Explain in this connection the values, if any, of internal and external sanctions. (p. 166 ; pp. 234-235).

3. Explain and criticise the doctrine of 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number'. What is meant by quality of pleasures, as distinguished from quantity ? Discuss the validity of the distinction (pp. 156-170).

Or,

Discuss the leading ethical standards. (Ch. X-XV). Point out any special excellence that in your opinion characterises any of them. (Ch. XV).

4. Explain clearly the respective claims of Egoistic and Universalistic Hedonism. Are the two capable of reconciliation ? (Ch. XI).

5. Give a critical exposition of Kant's view of the Moral Reason. It has been said that "the idea of a categorical imperative lands us in sheer emptiness." Discuss this proposition. (Ch. XIV).

6. Write short critical notes on the following :—

(*a*) The Freedom of the Will. (pp. 108-113).

(*b*) The Paradox of Hedonism. (pp. 144-145).

(*c*) Evolution and its application to Ethics. (pp. 171-183).

1912.

1. Briefly indicate the main psychological questions that have a bearing upon ethical problems. Explain the relation between the two (p. 7 ; pp. 11-12).

2. Fully elucidate what you consider to be the sound view about Conscience. (pp. 122-125).

3. Discuss Mill's answers to the following objections to Utilitarianism :—

(*a*) Pleasure is a mean and grovelling object of pursuit. (pp. 161-164 ; pp. 168-170).

(*b*) Happiness is a thing unattainable, and renunciation is the first condition of all nobleness of character. (It is often said that, as happiness or pleasure is a thing unattainable, the Utilitarian or Hedonistic theory must be set aside. In reply to this, Mill says that, even supposing that happiness is unattainable, Hedonism cannot be rejected, as it equally emphasises upon the mitigation of pains. Most of the sources of human suffering can, to a great extent, be removed. Again, it is certainly

going too far to suppose that happiness is unattainable. Though a life of continual rapture or happiness is impossible, yet nobody can deny that there are moments of pleasure or happiness in human life. A mind that is duly cultivated and is not extremely selfish is sure to be satisfied with a moderate amount of happiness. It is also said that renunciation is the first condition of the nobleness of character, and that Hedonism which advocates pleasure-seeking should be set aside. Mill replies that Altruistic Hedonism or Utilitarianism admits that renunciation or self-sacrifice is a virtue. But it refuses only to admit that sacrifice or renunciation is in itself a good. It is a virtue only in so far as it is conducive to the happiness of others or the community).

4. What, according to Utilitarianism, is the Internal Sanction of Morality ? Fully describe its nature. Is Utilitarianism justified in setting up such a sanction ? (p. 161 ; p. 166 ; pp. 234-235).

5. Reproduce, with comments, Martineau's Ethical classification of the springs of action. (pp. 95-100).

6. What explanation is given by Evolutional Hedonism of (*a*) the sense of moral obligation, (*b*) the relation between Egoism and Altruism ? (pp. 176-178 ; pp. 185-186 ; p. 189 ; p. 230).

7. Give a critical exposition of the characteristic historical forms of Extreme Rationalism. (Ch. XIV, pp. 198-208).

8. Define Personality, and give a simple exposition of the Ethics of Personality. (pp. 220-221 ; pp. 209-221 ; Ethics of Personality means Eudæmonistic Ethics).

9. Write an illustrative and expository note on the following : A manifestation of the law of moral progress is found in the gradual subordination of the sterner to the gentler virtues. (p. 262).

1913.

1. Write short notes on any *five* of the following :—the *Normative Sciences* (pp. 2-3). The relation between *Virtue and Knowledge. Casuistry* (p. 257). *The paradox of Hedonism* (pp. 144-145). *Bentham's Sanctions of Morality* (pp. 234-235). *Aristotle's definition of Virtue.* (The relation between virtue and knowledge is so intimate that Socrates asserts that virtue is knowledge. Aristotle says in opposition to Socrates that virtue is a kind of habit. The truth is that virtue is a kind of knowledge as well as a kind of habit. Virtue means the habit of deliberately choosing what is good. Now, this presupposes thought and insight. Thus virtue is related to true knowledge.

Aristotle's definition of virtue—"Virtue is a habit or trained faculty of choice, the characteristic of which lies in moderation, or observance of the mean relatively to the persons concerned, as determined by reason").

2. Write notes, explanatory or critical, on any *three* of the following statements :—

(*a*) It is curious that psychological ethics are altogether peculiar to Christendom. (Psychological Ethics is based on an examination of the facts of consciousness. An appeal to, and interpretation of, the facts of consciousness, constitute its cardinal feature. Christianity, by turning the attention of men from the outer to the inner, from the form to the spirit, fostered the growth of Psychological Ethics).

(*b*) No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness (p. 160 ; also p. 165).

(*c*) He who is unable to live in society, or who has no need to do so, because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god. (p. 14 ; pp. 241-245 ; such a person is either 'a god or a beast'—*i.e.*—either far above or far below humanity, for man is essentially a social being. Such a person must either have realised his ideal like a god, or have no ideal to realise like a beast).

(*d*) Act only on that maxim which thou canst at the same time will to become a universal law. (p. 199 ; pp. 205-206).

3. Illustrate the close relation between the sciences of Ethics and Politics in Greek thought. In what ways has the modern wider conception of the State influenced ethical thought ? (See p. 80. "The Greek world had no idea of a non-political society ; to it society and the state were synonymous terms. The social life was a life of citizenship. The individual apart from the state is to the Greeks an unethical abstraction." With the Greeks, "the only perfect social organisation is the communistic state, which directly and immediately controls the individual and recognises no rights, individual and social, but its own." This characteristic Greek conception is carried to its consummation in the *Republic of Plato*. This is at once a treatise on Politics and Ethics. In modern times, it is held that it is the individual person that is the

ethical unit, and that the function of the state is not to supersede the person, but to aid him in the development of his personality—to give him room and opportunity. The essence of the state is sovereignty and the maintenance of the sovereign power through coercion or control. In order that each may have freedom of self-development, each must be restrained in certain ways." It is mainly by extending the idea of personality that the modern theory of the state has influenced ethical thought).

4. Is it possible to justify the infliction of punishment on ethical grounds ? (pp. 236-239).

"There is nothing just or unjust which does not change its quality with a change of climate. Three degrees of latitude overturn the whole science of law". (Pascal). To what extent is morality absolute and independent of the environment ? (Man is essentially a moral being, and his moral nature is not a product of the forces of environment. See p. 261. But the development of mental and moral life is partly dependent on environment. It is a well-known fact that natural and social surroundings affect mental and moral development).

5. Indicate some of the chief directions which ethical thought has followed in England since the middle of the nineteenth century. (pp. 160 164, Ch. XII, Ch XV).

6. Give a brief historical account of the development of Utilitarian Hedonism in England. (Ch. XI).

7. Is it possible to classify the virtues ? What principles must be followed in attempting such a task ? (pp. 248 253). How far is the Platonic classification suitable to the circumstances of modern times ? (With regard to virtues, the old Platonic division into temperance, courage, wisdom and justice is still valid for modern times, if we just enlarge their connotation in view of modern requirements).

8. Examine the part played by custom in the development of the moral life of (*a*) an individual, (*b*) a people. In what degree is the law, whether customary or written, of a people a reliable indication of its moral outlook ? (See Ch. XX. Customs represent the social morality of a particular people and influence the moral conduct of the individual. It is from the customs that the individual gets his first moral training. The customs of a people are beneficial to it at a particular stage of its development. But it must be remembered that they are not absolutely binding on the individual. A person may be wiser than his generation. He may rise above the morality of his times and see the inadequacy of the customs. If so, he is justified in transgressing them. See Ch. X,

p. 189. It should be remembered that the political laws and the social customs or the unwritten laws of a community, being products of the collective mind, express the *ethos* or the common moral spirit of the community).

9. Examine J. S. Mill's account of the connection between justice and utility. (According to Mill, the principle of justice is not to be regarded as an absolute principle. Utility is the supreme principle underlying all virtues, including justice. Justice is to be administered when some right has been violated. Now, why should society defend a person in the possession of a right? It is the consideration of general utility that leads it to do so. Justice, then, is essentially related to the principle of utility and is not an independent principle. This is Mill's view. But the principle of utility is not a safe standard. See pp. 167-168).

1914.

1. What do you consider to be the *practical* value of the study of Ethics? (pp. 7-8). Discuss briefly the view that Ethics must either be based on or perfect itself in Religion. (pp. 22-28).

2. Write short critical notes on any *two* of the following subjects :— (*a*) Teleological Ethics. (By this we mean the system of Ethics which makes the end of life the moral standard); (*b*) Intuitionism (pp. 117-122; pp. 192-198); (*c*) Universalistic Hedonism, and its compatibility with Egoistic Hedonism. (pp. 156 164).

3. What do you consider to be the proper object of the moral judgment? Give a reasoned answer. (pp. 77-82).

4. Discuss the questions as to how far Hedonism in any of its forms can be regarded as furnishing an adequate basis for moral obligation (p. 161, pp. 166-168, pp. 225-226).

5. Discuss the relation of Conscience to the social system. (See p. 124 for the true view of conscience. Conscience means ultimately the rational or the ideal self; and it is by virtue of the presence of the rational self in him that a man is united to society. It is through conscience that he is an integral part of it).

6. State the problem raised by the apparently conflicting claims of Individualism and Socialism, and indicate the lines on which you would attempt a solution of its difficulties. (Ch. XX. Individualism makes the individual entirely independent of society. Socialism goes to the other extreme and makes him entirely dependent on and subservient to society. The truth lies in the middle).

7. A modern writer has said that "the origin and end of all philosophy is to be sought in Ethics." Explain this statement. [p. 105, foot-note. It is generally believed that Philosophy (including Metaphysics) is the basis of Ethics or Moral Science. But Kant and his followers take a new and peculiar view of the relation of ethical knowledge to Philosophy and Metaphysics. In opposition to the commonly accepted opinion, they make philosophical and metaphysical knowledge of realities depend ultimately on moral convictions. They hold that "if what is can ever be understood, it will be only from the side of what *ought to be*".

Thus, according to them, Philosophy originates or rises out of Ethics. See the Kantian system in History of Philosophy, also the Moral Argument of Kant in Theology. See also General Philosophy

But this is an exaggeration It cannot be maintained that Philosophy is entirely based on or rises out of Ethics. It may be more reasonably held that Philosophy constitutes the foundation of Ethics. See p. 19. The truth is that Philosophy (including Natural Theology and Metaphysics) and Ethics are interrelated See p 28

The statement that 'the end of all philosophy is to be sought in Ethics" involves an element of truth Philosophy explains the origin, function and destiny of man as a factor of the universe. It thus indicates the ideal of conduct and culminates in Ethics which is necessary for the guidance of life].

8 Consider the relative claims of (*a*) The Ascetic Life, (*b*) The Contemplative Life, (*c*) The Active Life, to be regarded respectively as the Ethical Ideal, in so far as they may be distinguished from each other.

(None of them taken by itself can be looked upon as the ethical ideal. Healthy human existence requires regulation of desires, contemplation and action "Action and reflection are the gymnastic and music of moral culture". For the defect of the ascetic ideal, see Ch. XIV)

9 Explain the moral significance of the following sayings:— (*a*) Know thyself, (*b*) Be a person, (*c*) "Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it". (Ch. XV).

1915.

1. Discuss the question whether the Good or the Right constitutes the fundamental notion of Ethics. (pp. 70-74).

Or,

Explain and illustrate the relation of Ethics to Sociology and Politics.

(pp. 18-18). Examine the view that Ethics is merely a branch of Sociology. (p. 29).

2. Discuss the nature of Instinct (p. 41). Distinguish between Desire and Motive, Motive and Intention. Determine the meaning of Motive in Ethics. (pp. 49-55).

Or,

Classify the Springs of Action and determine their mutual relations. (pp. 89-94). On what grounds is superiority claimed for the Judgments of Duty ? [See Chapter XVI for an account of the different theories of duty and the authority of moral law. It should be borne in mind that the judgment of duty does not simply and by itself perform the function of an impulse or spring of action. It gives rise to a 'moral impulse', *i.e.*, to an active impulse or desire (more or less strong) to do what is right and avoid what is wrong. See p. 62, para. 2. The moral impulse arising out of the judgment of duty is superior to all other impulses, because it tends to control or regulate them and thereby maintain the harmony of human life. It is the moral impulse which prompts us to prefer the right and reject the wrong—it is this impulse which tends to unify all the activities of life and make them converge towards one highest good. Self-realisation or a harmonious development of our nature in which the highest good consists is rendered possible by the moral impulse connected with the judgment of duty].

3. Show how the question as to the nature of the Ethical End is connected with the question as to the true nature of the Self. (Ch. II, pp. 19-22 ; Ch. XV).

4. What is the meaning of Kant's dictum 'you ought, and therefore you can' ? (Ch. VIII, p. 105). It has been said that the idea of Self-determination combines the Libertarian and the Determinist theories. Examine this statement (Ch. VIII, *Note*, p. 113).

5. Dwell on the following points : (a) the relation conceived to exist between the individual and society ; (*b*) the facts supporting this conception ; (c) the sense in which the end is to be regarded as a personal one. (Ch. XX).

6. Outline the leading features of Intuitionalism as an ethical theory, noticing the difficulties alleged to be involved in it. (pp. 117-122 ; pp. 192-197).

Or,

What account does Evolutionary theory as applied to Ethics give of

the genesis of Conscience ? Do you think it possible to conserve the objective character of the authority of Conscience on the basis of this theory ? (p. 182).

7. Fully expound the moral theory according to which the highest good lies in the realisation of the highest self. (pp. 210-217).

Or,

'Each of the various ethical theories has contributed some valuable element to the whole of ethical thought.' Discuss this statement. (p. 223. This can be fully answered with a general knowledge of the theories dealt with in Ch. X to Ch. XV).

1916.

1. Define Ethics and point out its relation to Psychology. (pp. 1-2 pp. 11-13).

Or,

Indicate the uses of the study of Ethics. (pp. 7-8).

2. Explain the nature and conditions of moral judgment. Has it any moral quality ? (pp. 75-77).

Or,

Determine the character of the Moral Faculty and its place in the human constitution. (Ch. IX).

3. Distinguish Duty, Obedience, and Virtue. [See p. 248. The word 'obedience' means in Ethics the fulfilment of moral obligation—"the act of freely and rationally obeying the self-imposed moral law"—the actual performance of what is judged to be the duty in any particular case—the practical acceptance of the claim of moral law as the guide of life and the consequent regulation of conduct according to it. Uniform and habitual obedience develops that inner excellence of character which is called virtue, and virtue in its turn renders subsequent obedience easy and agreeable. Thus the order of events in normal moral development is the following :—(i) a theoretical recognition of duty ; (ii) obedience or the actual performance of duty ; (iii) formation of a virtuous character].

Point out the conditions of duty. [The conditions of duty are the following :—The existence of conscience. It is conscience that enables one to determine his duty in a particular case. (iii) The power of understanding and that of self-determination or choice. Every moral act presupposes the power of understanding and that of rational and free choice from alternative courses of action. See Ch. IV

and Ch. VIII). (iii) Strength or ability to perform the act in question. (ix) Actual or concrete circumstances. Duties are in a sense relative to circumstances. It is the actual circumstances that require us to act in particular ways. Different occasions and circumstances require the performance of different duties].

Or,

Determine the conditions and limits of Moral Responsibility. Is a servant responsible for what he does at the bidding of his master? (The power of understanding the nature and consequence of an act and that of freely choosing from among the alternative courses of action are the essential conditions of responsibility. Hence idiots, lunatics and simple-minded children are not held responsible for their conduct. See Ch. IV, Moral and Non-moral acts. The greater is the power of reflection, understanding or judgment, the greater the ability to perform the duty, the higher the rank and the more advantageous the position of the agent, the greater is his responsibility.

A servant, as a rational and moral agent having the power of self-determination, *is* responsible for what he does at the bidding of his master, though the degree of his responsibility may not be very great. A servant is under an obligation to obey his master only if the commands of the master are not morally wrong. When a superior requires the performance of a wrong action, such requirement itself is immoral and so void. Any rational individual acting according to an immoral command takes upon himself the responsibility for its performance).

4. Is Hedonism identical with Utilitarianism? (p. 141, foot-note). Give a critical estimate of the Utilitarianism of Mill. (pp. 160-170).

Or,

How has the Utilitarianism of Bentham been modified by Mill, and that of Mill by Spencer? (p. 157 ; pp. 161-164 ; pp. 173-178).

5. Distinguish between Motive and Intention. (pp. 52-55). Which of them determines the moral quality of an action? (Ch. VI, Sec. 2).

Or,

Was St. Crispin right in stealing leather to make shoes for the poor? (It is said that St. Crispin felt such a compassion for his poor fellow-villagers walking bare-footed on the snow that he stole leather to make shoes for them. Now, his motive was undoubtedly a noble one, but still his act cannot be justified, for the means adopted by him was bad. "The end does not justify the means." See Ch. VI, Sec. 2, pp. 79-80. It may not

be proper to call him a thief and a rascal in the ordinary senses of the terms; yet his act is not morally justifiable or defensible. There are, of course, exceptional cases in which the end appears to justify the means. But such an act as was performed by Crispin does not come under the class of exceptional cases. See Ch. VI, Note 2, pp. 85-87).

6. Examine the doctrines—(*a*) Might is right, (*b*) Right is might. [The doctrine 'might is right' is not a sound one. Mere 'might' or power cannot make or unmake what is 'right'. See Ch. X, Legal Theory. The modern Legal Theory is a revival of the doctrine of an ancient Greek sophist named Thrasymachus who is described by Plato as exclaiming "I proclaim that might is right, justice the interest of the stronger". (Plato's Dialogues, Jowett's edition, p. 206). The word 'right' when used as a noun means 'what one can justly claim or demand from another.' Rights and duties are correlative. Now, might cannot create any right in this sense. The attempt to deduce or derive right and duty from might is a failure. Even the weak have their moral rights. The old rule that 'they should take who have the power, and they should keep who can' does not confer any right on those that take and keep. The acceptance of this principle would lead to the dissolution of all states and societies. Cf. Hobbes' theory of the 'natural state' of man (pp. 148-149). The Darwinian principle of survival of the strongest and destruction of the weakest has no place in the moral world. The most potent of all forces in the world is moral force. See pp. 29-30. A person or a nation that, armed with mere physical power, tries to override the moral right of another, wakens aversion and repulsion on the part of others, and so, not only becomes more and more isolated, but actually generates opposing forces in other human centres].

1917.

1. What is the proper subject-matter of Ethics ? (pp. 4-7). How is Ethics related to Politics ? (pp. 16-19).

2. Distinguish between Conscience and Prudence, and determine their relative place in the human constitution (p. 127).

Or,

Distinguish between Duty and Merit. (p. 231 ; p. 248). How are degrees of merit to be estimated ? (pp. 232-233).

3. What do you understand by Conflict of Duties ? How should an individual act in such a case ? (pp. 253-256).

Or,

Indicate the character and course of Moral Progress (Ch. XXIV). Is it consistent with the Intuitional Theory of Morals? (The Moral Sense form of the Intuitional Theory is not consistent with the fact of moral progress. See pp. 119-120. But an attempt has been made by the supporters of Rational Intuitionalism to show that their theory is quite consistent with it. According to them, conscience always intuitively discovers moral principles aright; it cannot err and cannot be educated. But if so, how can there be moral training and moral progress? How is it that there is such a thing as diversity of moral judgments? How is it that moral judgments are sometimes erroneous? In reply to these, the intuitionists say that "men differ, not as to principles, but as to the details of application—as to their scope, significance and applicability." So far as the general principles are concerned, they are the same in all persons. Moral progress consists in the gradual enlargement of moral views—in understanding more and more precisely the scope, meaning and applicability of the moral principles. Thus, according to them, moral progress is quite consistent with the admission of self-evident and universal principles of morality. See pp. 120, 121. See p. 124, for a comparison of the intuitional and eudæmonistic views).

4. Give a critical amount of the Moral Standard advocated by *any one* of the following writers:—(*a*) Bentham, (*b*) Bain, (*c*) Martineau. (pp. 157-160; pp. 95-99; p. 118. For a full account of Bain's theory, see Appendix B).

5. Distinguish between Natural and Moral Evil. Are they connected in any way? (pp. 55-58).

Distinguish between Hedonism and Eudæmonism, and estimate their relative values as moral theories. (Ch. XI; Ch. XV, § 2 and § 3).

6. Explain the relation of the individual to Society, and point out the importance of the relation in morals. (Ch. XX).

Or,

Determine the character of Volition, indicating its relation to Desire and Motive. (Ch. IV, Sec. 2).

1918.

1. 'Ethics is more closely related to Philosophy than to the natural sciences'. Fully explain this statement. (Ch. II, Sec. 4).

2. Discriminate between the psychological and the ethical aspect of Springs of Action, and expound the doctrine of their ethical gradation. (Ch. VII).

3. Examine the psychological presuppositions on which all Hedonistic systems are based. [Hedonism is based on Empirical or Sensationistic Psychology—its theories of knowledge, nature of self and volition. For a critical account of these, see General Philosophy and Psychology. As an ethical theory Hedonism is made to rest mainly on the psychological assumption that pleasure is the only natural end, motive or object of desire (the theory of *Psychological Hedonism*). For a critical account of this, see Ch. XI, Sec. 3, pp. 142-147].

Can an altruistic system be erected on a Hedonistic basis ? (Ch. XI, Sec. 7).

4. Show how the question as to the nature of the Ethical End is connected with the question as to the true nature of the Self. (See Q. 3 of 1915).

5. 'The realisation of human personality means its realisation in Society'. Fully explain this. (Ch. XV, pp. 211-212 ; also Ch. XX).

6. Explain fully what you mean by the Standards of Judgment. (A general knowledge of Ch. X to Ch. XV will enable the student to answer it).

7. Discuss carefully the theories which admit but mistake obligation. (Ch. XVI, Sec. 2, pp. 224-227 ; also the note on Spencer's theory of obligation ; also Ch. XII, p. 185 and p. 189).

8. It has been said that the idea of Self-determination combines the Libertarian and the Determinist theories. Explain the position. (See Q. 4 of 1915).

9. Discuss the problem of Sin, noticing the following points :—(*a*) existence of, (*b*) nature of, (*c*) recovery from, and (*d*) responsibility for. [For (*a*), see p. 55. The problem of the origin and existence of moral evil or sin is metaphysical and theological. See General Philosophy, Philosophy of God. See also Dr. Flint's Theism, pp. 252-259. It may be simply remarked here that sin or moral evil is a consequence of the free will or the power of rational self-determination with which finite self-conscious minds are endowed. For (*b*), see pp. 55-58 ; also p. 248, foot-note. For (*c*), see Ch. XXIV, Sec. 3, p. 263 ; see also p. 221, p. 222, last para. For (*d*), see Q. 3 of 1916. A person is responsible for sinful acts performed intentionally and vicious habits formed by him. See Ch. IV and Ch. VIII].

1919.

Either,

1. Determine the scope of Moral Science and its relation to Metaphysics. (pp. 5-7, pp 19 22).

Or,

What methods should be employed in Moral Philosophy ? (pp. 34-36). Examine in this connexion the view of Sidgwick. (p 39)

2. Distinguish between Sin and Error Is it a sin or an error on the part of a young man to neglect his education ? (Ch. IV, § 4).

Either,

3 What are the conditions of our Moral Life ? Indicate their relative importance (Ch IV, Ch. VI, Ch VIII, Q. 3 of 1916.

Or,

Determine the nature and grounds of Moral obligation (Ch. XVI). Is it possible for an individual to do more than his duty ?

[The term 'duty' is sometimes used popularly in a narrower sense to mean simply what is legally binding or obligatory upon an individual, and an individual is said to do more than his duty if he does more than what he is legally bound to do We know that contractual and legal relations give rise to certain definite duties enforceable by external authority (called determinate or perfect obligations or duties), and these are popularly sometimes called 'duties' (in the narrower sense). See Ch. XVII, § 3, p 233 If an individual performs any right act which he is *morally* bound to perform, but *not legally*, then he is supposed to do more than his duty. In Ethics, however, the word 'duty' is taken in a wider sense to signify every right act which we ought to perform, whether determinate or indeterminate, whether legally obligatory or not. Hence, from the strictly moral or ethical point of view, an individual can never do more than his duty]

Either,

4. Discuss the relative merits of Egoism and Altruism as moral theories (Ch. XI, § 4 7).

Or,

Estimate the relative values of the theories which take Divine and Political Law as the moral standard. Are we to conceive the standard as a Law or an End ? (Ch X).

Either,

5. Distinguish between Duty, Merit, and Virtue. Are they connected in any way ? (p. 231 ; p. 248).

Or,

Distinguish between Desire, Motive and Intention. (pp. 49-50; pp. 52-55). Which of them determines the moral quality of an action ? (Ch. VI, Sec. 2).

6. Write explanatory notes on *any three* of the following :—Self-realization, (Ch. XV, Sec. 2 ; also p. 219). Paradox of Hedonism, (pp. 144, 145). Eudæmonism, (Ch. XV). Conflict of Duties, (Ch. XXII, § 8). Conflict of Motives, (Ch. IV, p. 46 ; p. 52).

1920.

1. Define and show the relation between Moral Law, Political Law and Physical Law. Explain, and give your own opinion of, the doctrine which makes Moral Law to be only a branch of Political Law.

2. Distinguish between Natural Evil and Moral Evil, and between Moral Evil and Error, giving examples of each. Can a person be morally responsible for his errors ? Give your reason with examples.

3. 'Self determination is a postulate of moral judgment' ; explain this by showing the meanings of self-determination and moral judgment, and showing that the latter is impossible without the former. What judgments may be passed on an action not self-determined ?

4. Distinguish between the intellectual and the emotional elements of moral consciousness, and illustrate your meaning by analysing any voluntary action, and showing how these elements enter into it.

5. 'We are morally *bound* to do what is right'; discuss the nature of the binding force, stating different opinions, and giving your own opinion, with reasons and examples.

6. What is meant by an ethical standard ? Explain and examine the theory which makes pleasure to be the ultimate ethical standard.

7. 'Morality is eternal and immutable law'. 'Morality changes with the changing circumstances of human life'. Explain these two theories, and give your own opinion regarding them, with your reasons.

1921.

1. *Either*, Define Ethics and point out its relation to Politics and Metaphysics.

Or, Distinguish between Moral, Immoral and Non-Moral acts. How are they related to one another ?

2. *Either*, Analyse Moral Consciousness, indicating the relative function of the elements which constitute it.

Or, Discuss the question whether moral consciousness is original or derivative.

3. *Either*, Determine the character and conditions of the Moral Judgment. How is such a judgment arrived at, and are we accountable for it ?

Or, Is diversity of moral judgment compatible with the intuitional theory of morals, and is unanimity of such judgment consistent with Hedonism ?

4. *Either*, Determine the character of humility as a virtue. Is it consistent with veracity and self-respect ?

Or, Determine the character and conditions of duty. Can there be a conflict of duties ? Which line of action should be adopted in such a case ?

5. *Either*, Is pleasure identical with happiness ? Examine the doctrine that the greatest happiness of the greatest number is the standard of morality.

Or, Distinguish between Egoistic and Altruistic Hedonism. Which of them seems to you to be the more consistent ethical theory ?

6. *Either*, What do you understand by the Moral Sanctions ? Examine the views of Bentham and J. S. Mill in this connection, and explain the end served by the sanctions.

Or, Distinguish between Desires and Affections, indicating their place in our moral constitution. How are they related to Will ?

1922.

1. Distinguish between Positive and Normative sciences, giving examples. Why is Ethics called a normative science ?

2. Define motives and intentions. Is the moral judgment concerned with motives or intentions ?

3. State the doctrine of Psychological Hedonism and distinguish it from Ethical Hedonism.

4. Give a short exposition of Utilitarianism as a standard of conduct.

5. Formulate Kant's doctrine of the Categorical Imperative. Examine the view that all duties are deducible from it.

6. Define Conscience and consider how far it is reliable as a faculty of moral judgment.

7. What is meant by 'conflict of duties'? Give instances. What should the individual do in such a case?

8. "The virtues which it is desirable for human beings to cultivate, vary considerably with different times and places". Explain and examine.

9. "We can realise the true self only by realising social ends". Explain and examine.

1923.

1. How does moral action differ from non-moral? Are the offences committed by hereditary criminals and the self-indulgence of habitual drunkards moral or not?

2. What is the object of moral judgment? Do you agree with the view that the end justifies the means? Discuss the question with special reference to the punishment of criminals.

3. There is a progressive unfolding of the life of the spirit which requires a gradation of moral codes in an ascending scale adapted to the different stages. Explain this, and show whether the standards that apply to the adult and the normal are equally applicable to the child and the sub normal or the defective.

4. Analyse the consciousness of duty, and distinguish between 'obligation' and 'right' and 'virtue' and 'duty' as moral categories. Discuss briefly the following :—(a) the moral law implies a law-giver, (b) 'ought' implies 'can'.

5. 'When conscience is referred to as the fundamental principle of morals, we must not understand it to mean the conscience of this or that individual'. Explain. What is your view of the proper attitude of the individual towards the rules of his community?

6. What are the moral sanctions? How is moral obligation related to the moral sanctions? Discuss this with special reference to the question whether the consciousness of obligation is possible in a state of segregation from society and independently of the mediation of an objective code of duties.

7. The progress of Hedonism through Bentham, Mill, Spencer, and Sidgwick is an illustration of the gradual surrender of the hedonistic principle. Explain fully.

8. How does Kant arrive at the Categorical Imperative? Estimate its value as a criterion of moral life.

9. Do you accept the doctrine of the relativity of moral distinctions in the sense that there is a stage beyond good and evil where these distinctions do not apply ?

10. Is morality possible without religion ? 'In perception, it is Self and Nature ; in morals, it is Self and God, that stand face to face, in the subjective and the objective antitheses'. Explain and discuss.

1924.

1. *Either*, Define Ethics and show how it is related to Philosophy and to the Positive Sciences.

Or, What are the facts of our moral life ? How is ethical method related to ethical theory ?

2. *Either*, What is a non-moral action ? Has the sub-conscious life any moral significance for the individual ? Is there any difference between approving a wrong action and doing it ?

Or, Distinguish between desire, motive and intention. Which of them determines the moral quality of an action ? Fully explain this by reference to a concrete example.

3. *Either*, What are the objects of moral judgment ? Is it intuitive or inferential ? Has it any moral quality ? Give reasons for your answer.

Or, Indicate the character and function of the moral sentiment. How is it related to the moral judgment ? Can the moral sentiment be always taken as sure test of the moral quality of an action ?

4. *Either*, Distinguish between relative and absolute good. What is your view of the highest human good and of the means of attaining it ?

Or, Distinguish between Psychological and Ethical Hedonism. Does the one inevitably lead to the other ? Is Hedonism the same as Eudæmonism ?

5. *Either*, Is society morally justified in restraining the freedom of the individual ? Is punishment for an attempt to commit suicide justifiable ? Give reasons for your answer.

Or, Distinguish between Conscience and Prudence, and explain how they jointly contribute to our moral life. Is prudence the same as wisdom ?

1925.

1. Define Ethics and point out its relation to Psychology and Philosophy.

2. Distinguish between motive and intention. Which of them determines the ethical quality of an action ?

3. Analyse the nature of conscience. Is it present in ready-made form in all persons ? Give reasons for your answer.

4. Distinguish between Hedonism and Eudæmonism and discuss their relative merits as moral theories.

5. *Either*, How has the utilitarianism of Bentham been modified by J. S. Mill and that of J. S. Mill by Spencer ?

Or, Is Hedonism the same as Utilitarianism ? Critically examine the modified Utilitarianism of J. S. Mill.

6. Enunciate Kant's doctrine of the Categorical Imperative. Discuss its value as a theory of ethical life.

7. Indicate the main characteristics of the moral sentiments, and examine their relation to the moral judgment.

8. Distinguish between Virtue and Prudence. Is it possible to classify virtues on a strictly ethical basis ?

9. 'As the individual apart from society is an unreal abstraction, so is society apart from the individual.' Examine the position.

1926.

1. Briefly indicate the scope of Ethics. Why is Ethics called a normative science ?

2. Define Conscience, and consider how far it is infallible as a faculty of moral judgment.

3. *Either*, Examine the merits of Eudæmonism as a moral theory.

Or, Distinguish between Egoism and Altruism. Is it possible to effect a conciliation between the two attitudes ?

4. Give a critical estimate of the Kantian principle of Categorical Imperative. What, in your opinion, is the real significance of the principle ?

5. What is the paradox of Hedonism ? Examine Mill's account of Universalistic Hedonism.

6. What do you understand by 'conflict of duties' ? Is there any real conflict among duties ? Support your answer by reasons.

7. Show the relation between Duty and Virtue. Is any classification of virtues possible from a strictly ethical standpoint ?

8. What are moral sanctions ? Fully discuss Bentham's doctrine of moral sanctions.

9. Point out the relation of the Individual to Society. In what sense is the idea of an organism applicable to human society ?

1927.

1. How do you distinguish science from philosophy? Do you regard ethics as a science or a philosophy?

2. Distinguish motive from intention. Which of them is the main determinant of the moral judgment?

3. Give a critical account of Psychological Hedonism.

4. How does Mill pass from egoistic hedonism to utilitarianism?

5. What does Kant mean by 'the good will'? Critically examine Kant's ethical theory.

6. 'Self-realization is through self-sacrifice'. Explain Do you support this view?

7. In your conception of ethics, what place would you assign to conscience?

8. What is your view of the relation of rights to obligations?

9. Give a critical account of the retributive theory of punishment.

1928.

1. Explain the difference between moral and non-moral actions, and between natural and moral evil, giving reasons and examples. (Ch. IV).

2. Show by what part (factor) of an action you judge the action to be morally right or wrong, giving reasons and examples. (Ch. VI, § 2).

3. State the conditions which you consider to be postulated in judging actions morally, defining each, and showing why it has to be postulated. (Ch VIII)

4. Some hold that the moral rightness of an action consists in conduciveness to happiness. Explain this theory, and give your estimate of it with reasons and examples. (Ch. XI).

5. Some have held that men do good to other men only for the sake of good to themselves. Explain and examine this doctrine, and give your estimate of it with reasons and examples. (Ch. XI, § 4).

6. Define conscience and prudence, showing the relation between them and giving examples. Do you know any form of thought that identifies them? (Ch. IX, p. 115, p. 127).

7. Explain the meaning and purpose of punishment and its relation to moral laws, giving differences of opinion and reasons for them. (Ch. XIX).

8. In what does the character of a person consist, and how is character formed? (Ch. XXIII).

1929.

1. Show how Ethics is related to (a) Psychology and (b) Sociology, (Ch. II)

2. Does the moral quality of an act inhere in the act regarded objectively, or in the subjective willing of the act, or in both ? Discuss the question, with reference to a concrete example. (Ch. VI & Ch. XXII).

3. Are there 'kinds of pleasure' ? Discuss the question with special reference to J. S. Mill's view. (Ch. XI, § 6).

4. Distinguish between (a) Right and Duty, (b) Duty and Virtue. (Ch. XXII).

5. Discuss the retributive theory of punishment, with special reference to the question of capital punishment. (Ch. XIX).

6. Does the moral consciousness throw any light on the problem of freedom ? Discuss the question with special reference to Kant's view. (Ch VIII, pp. 104, 105, 112).

7. Is the moral life possible outside society ? When is resistance to the social order justified ? (Ch. XX, Ch. X, § 4).

8 How does the moral life differ from the religious ? Is morality possible without religion ? (Ch II, § 5).

1930.

1. Explain the relation of Ethics to Psychology and show how far ethical theory has been affected by the results of psychological investigations

2 What, in your view, is the essential character of Intuitionist Ethics ? Discuss the different forms of the intuitive method in modern ethics

3. What are the ethical objections to the gambling habit ? Discuss the question from the intuitionist and the utilitarian standpoints.

4. What precisely is meant by the principle 'greatest happiness of of the greatest number' ? Is it acceptable as a workable standard of the moral life ?

5. Analyse the notion of duty, and discuss the question of 'conflicting duties'.

6. How is the individual related to society ? How far is patriotism a moral duty ? Does it ever cease to be morally right ?

7. What are the conditions of moral responsibility ? How far are we responsible for acts over which we have no control ?

1931.

1. What place in Ethics would you assign to unconscious actions? Are actions done from habit to be judged morally?

2. Discuss the doctrine of evolution in its application to morality, and show how far it has affected the principles of Ethics.

3. Analyse the concept of the moral self, and discuss self-realization as the highest ethical end.

4. Distinguish between legal right and moral right. It may not always be *right* to do what one has a right to do. Explain and discuss.

5. Are there 'conflicting duties'? Discuss the question with special reference to how conflicting moral rules are dealt with (*a*) by Intuitionalism, (*b*) by Utilitarianism.

6. On what ethical grounds would you condemn (*a*) an act of suicide, (*b*) Antonio's contract with Shylock as regards the pound of flesh?

7. 'Moral obligation is founded on the belief that virtue is enjoined by the command of God'. Explain and discuss.

8. Estimate the value of Kant's categorical imperative as a criterion of moral life.

1932.

1. Give your own estimate of the method by means of which the seeking of general happiness may be proved to be a morally worthy end.

2. 'The old order changeth yielding place to new.' How far does this apply to the province of morality? Does not progressive morality invalidate the immutability and universality of moral laws?

3. Is sacrifice an end in itself? In what sense is it an element of the moral life?

4. Explain the meaning of the term 'right'. Would you concede Shylock's right to the pound of flesh according to the terms of his contract with Antonio? If not, why not?

5. Is a man justified in putting an end to his own life? Give reasons for your answer.

6. Explain the meaning of moral responsibility, and its relation to moral obligation.

7. Explain the distinction between hedonism and utilitarianism, and examine the validity of their respective contributions to ethics.

8. How would you morally judge a drunkard who, in a state of intoxication, abuses his fellow-passengers in a railway train, and why?

1933.

1. Define the term 'science', and discuss the question whether Ethics may rightly be called a science.

2. What place would you assign to pleasure in the organization of the moral life? Would you distinguish between the greatest and the highest pleasure? If so, on what grounds?

3. Write short explanatory notes on—

(a) Thou oughtest. ∴ Thou canst.

(b) Die to live.

4. What is your idea of a perfect life? Is there a life beyond good and evil?

5. What are the rights of man? Does 'might' create 'right'? Give reasons for your answer.

6. Analyse the consciousness of moral obligation. Do you agree with the view that the sense of obligation is an offshoot of the experience of social discipline?

7. Is morality possible without religion? Give reasons for your answer.

8. Explain the nature of moral judgment. Discuss whether the motive or intention is the precise object of moral judgement.

9. Explain and examine *any two* theories of moral obligation.

1934 (HONOURS).

1. State and examine the metaphysical postulates of ethics. (Ch. II, § 4; Ch. VIII).

2. Explain the relation of desire to pleasure.

'Pleasure is the constant and exclusive object of desire.' Examine the statement. (Ch XI, § 8).

3. Explain and examine Butler's theory of conscience. (Ch. IX, Note 2). Are the deliverances of conscience always and necessarily infallible? Discuss this. (Ch. IX, pp. 119-121, p. 124).

4. Explain and examine Mill's introduction of a qualitative distinction among pleasures. (Ch. XI, pp. 161-163, pp. 168-169).

5. Exhibit how Eudæmonism offers a reconciliation of the extreme doctrines of Hedonism and Rigorism. (Ch. XV).

6. Explain the different theories of punishment. Which of them do you prefer, and on what grounds? (Ch. XIX).

7. How would you explain the relation of ethics to politics? (Ch. II, § 8).

Is ethics exclusively concerned with conduct or with character as well? Discuss. (Ch. I and Ch. XXIII).

8. Explain and criticise Kant's theory of the categorical imperative. (Ch. XIV).

9. Write ethical notes on *any two* of the following :—

(a) Happiness is not the reward of virtue, but is virtue itself. (p. 156 ; p. 215).

(b) Die to live. (Ch. XV, § 4).

(c) Be a person and respect others as persons. (Ch. XV, § 4).

(d) You *ought*, therefore you *can*. (Ch. VIII, p. 105).

1934 (PASS).

1. Examine fully the view that Ethics, 'though a normative science, is not to be regarded as a practical science.' (Ch. I, § 2 ; Appendix B).

2. Attempt a classification of the ethical methods, indicating what you consider to be the true method of Ethics. (Ch. III).

3. Explain and illustrate the different forms of non-moral action, and trace the growth of a voluntary action through its varying stages. (Ch. IV).

4. Show that 'the moral judgment is not properly passed upon a *thing done*, but upon a *person doing*.' (p. 81). Determine precisely in this connexion the nature and object of moral judgment. (Ch. VI).

5. Explain the relation of Ethics to Metaphysics. (Ch. II).

6. Discuss the merits and demerits of Hedonism as a standard of moral life. On what grounds would you distinguish between Hedonism and Eudæmonism as types of ethical theory ? (Ch. XI and Ch. XV).

7. Trace the development of Utilitarianism as an ethical theory, with special reference to its different presentations by Bentham and Mill. (Ch. XI, § 6).

8. Explain and examine Kant's formulation of the categorical imperative. (Ch. XIV).

9. Expound carefully the relation between duties and virtues. Is there such a thing as a 'conflict of duties' ? (Ch. XXII, § 1 and § 3).

1935 (HONOURS).

1. Explain the relation of Ethics *either* to Psychology *or* to Metaphysics. (Ch. II, § 1 and § 4).

2. What different views have been taken of the object of the moral judgment ? Give your own view, with your reasons. (Ch. VI, § 2).

3. What different views have been held on the nature of moral obligation ? State your own view, and the grounds on which you hold it. (Ch. XVI, § 2).

4. Compare conscience and prudence. Which of them offers better moral guidance ? (Ch. IX, § 8).

5. Is it possible to make a distinction among pleasures in respect of quality ? Is such a distinction consistent with Hedonism ? (Ch. XI, § 6, pp. 161—164 ; § 7, pp. 168—170).

6. In what different ways has the highest good been conceived ? Explain your own view on the subject (Ch. V, § 5 ; Ch. XI to Ch. XV).

7. Explain and distinguish virtue and duty. Discuss the possibility of 'a conflict of duties'. (Ch. XXII, § 1 & § 8).

8. Explain what is meant by 'moral sanctions'. Are such sanctions really necessary to Ethics ? Discuss the question. (Ch. XVIII).

9. Explain any *two* of the following :—

(a) To *get* pleasure, one must *forget* it (pp. 144, 145).

(b) If conscience had *power*, as it has manifest *authority*, it would absolutely govern the world (Note 2, pp. 182, 188).

(c) Kant's view of the relation of duty to inclination (Ch. XIV).

(d) To desire a thing and to find it pleasurable, are two ways of expressing the same psychological fact. (Ch. XI, § 8).

1935 (PASS).

1. Explain the relation of Ethics to any *one* of the following :— Psychology, Metaphysics, and Theology. (Ch. II).

2. Fully explain the definition :—Ethics is a normative science. [Ch. I, § 2 ; Appendix B (*Nature of the science of Ethics*)].

3. Distinguish the moral from the non-moral (Ch. IV). Characterise the precise object of the moral judgment. (Ch. VI, §2).

4. Why am I *morally obliged* to do what I perceive to be right ? Briefly explain the different views held on the subject. (Ch. XVI).

5. Explain what is meant by the moral sanctions. (Ch. XVIII).

6. What are the different theories of punishment ? Give your own theory, with your reasons. (Ch. XIX).

7. Explain and examine the theory that pleasure is the sole and ultimate end of action. (Ch. XI).

8. Explain the ethical doctrine of self-realization. (Ch. XV).

9. What is your own view of the relation of the individual to society ? How would you, according to this view, reconcile the conflicting claims of egoism and altruism ? (Ch. XX ; also Ch. XII and XV).

1936 (PASS).

1. Define the province of ethics. Explain the relation of ethics *either* to psychology *or* to metaphysics.

2. Analyse desire. Is desire always and necessarily directed to pleasure ? Discuss.

3. Carefully explain the essential characteristics of a voluntary action. How far do our habitual actions come under the scope of moral judgment ?

4. What precisely is the meaning of conscience according to the intuitional school ? Compare the standard of conscience with that of prudence.

5. What is your own theory of moral obligation, and why do you prefer it ?

6. Does pleasure admit of a qualitative distinction ? Discuss the question.

7. *Either*, How far does the conception of a *social organism* adjust the respective claims of the individual and society ?

Or, Furnish a brief critical examination of Kant's ethical theory.

8. Can the *moral* be evolved out of the *unmoral* ? Discuss. Briefly indicate the chief directions in which there has been moral progress.

9. What is meant by a conflict of duties ? Can such a conflict be transcended ? Is one justified in saving the life of a really innocent person by giving false evidence on his behalf ? Discuss.

1936 (HONOURS).

1. 'There are no holidays from virtue'. Explain fully this statement.

2. Discuss the ethical value of the distinction between (a) formal and material goodness, (b) subjective and objective rightness.

3. How would you classify ethical theories ? Examine in this connection Martineau's classification of ethical theories.

4. Critically examine the ethical theory known as Eudæmonism.

5. Is it possible to do more than one's duty ?

6. Is a classification of springs of action (a) psychologically possible, and (b) ethically important ?

7. Can pleasure be regarded as a measure of value ?

8. Discuss the relation between society and the individual. How far can conscience be regarded as a social product ?

9. 'Over-conscientiousness is no security for a virtuous life'. Explain how far this is true.

1937 (PASS).

1. Define the scope of ethics, and distinguish in this connexion between *moral rightness* and *legal rightness.*

2. What place have induction and deduction in moral philosophy? Can rules of moral conduct be derived from the consent of mankind?

3. How are moral distinctions justified by the intuitionists and the utilitarians respectively? Which view would you yourself profess, and why?

4. Discuss hedonism as a moral theory, and distinguish in this connexion between psychological and ethical hedonism.

5. Define utilitarianism, and give a comparative estimate of the utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill.

6. Examine the following statements :—

(*a*) There are few laws, a breach of which morality does not allow in certain circumstances.

(*b*) The Moral Law is valid unconditionally and universally, and does not admit of any exceptions.

7. Analyse the consciousness of obligation, and discuss the question whether obligation necessarily implies relation to a higher person as its source.

8. How is the individual related to society? Would you justify individual self assertion against the established customs of society? Give reasons for your answer.

9. Write short notes on :—*duty*, *right*, *virtue*, *sanction*.

1937 (HONOURS).

1. Is the distinction between normative and positive sciences an absolute one? Show the importance of this question for a proper understanding of the scope of ethics.

2. 'A vicious man, in a sense, can, and, in a sense, cannot, do a good action'. Explain how.

3. How far does the progress of moral life imply a limitation of volitional activity?

4. Is the charge of formalism levelled against Kant's ethics quite justified?

5. 'Moral life consists of particulars, of "situations", of definite circumstances and individual occasions, and an indeterminate or vague morality is no morality at all.' Discuss this view of moral life. What would be the position of casuistry in such a view?

6. Characterize the ethical view which takes the end to be self-realization. Does it suffer from vagueness?

7. Discuss the relation between virtue and wisdom.

8. How would apply ethical principles to the problem of crime and punishment?

9. Discuss, in connexion with the question of the relation between ethics and metaphysics, the validity of the remark that the metaphysical question is, more particularly, the question of the nature and worth of human personality.

1938 (PASS).

1. A science is admittedly a systematic investigation into some aspect of Nature. What, then, is exactly meant when we say that ethics is a science ?

2. Distinguish between ethics and psychology. Is training in psychology a necessary preliminary to ethical investigation ?

3. In the ordinary course of life we are guided by pleasure. We ought to follow it, therefore, as the ultimate end of our life. Do you agree ? Discuss.

4. 'Altruism is only magnified egoism'. A philanthropist is therefore to be denounced as an egoist. Do you agree ?

5. Moral laws or standards vary from age to age and from country to country. Is it then that there is nothing constant in our moral consciousness ?

6. A person finds himself in such circumstances that he cannot in any way earn a living ; he is consequently faced with starvation and death. To save his life and, also his family, he commits burglary in the house of his neighbour. How would you judge his conduct ? Give reasons for your answer.

7. Write short notes on :—

Moral Ideal, Casuistry, Hedonism, Asceticism.

1938 (HONOURS).

1. 'There are no holidays from virtue.' Explain and illustrate.

2. Distinguish between moral ideas and ideas about morality. What part do they respectively play in the development of moral life ?

3. 'Out of our natural individuality, we have to form a moral personality'. Explain and illustrate.

4. State the different ways in which Kant formulates the moral law, and show how they are connected with one another.

5. 'Hedonism is unable to avoid the reference to reason, Rationalism the reference to sensibility.' Explain and illustrate this statement.

6. Give a critical estimate of evolutionistic ethics.

7. How far can conscience be regarded as a social product ?

8. Characterize the ethical theory known as Perfectionism. On what grounds has it been maintained that it is inconclusive ?

9. 'To stand in the right relation to myself is to stand in the right relation to my fellows; to realize my own true self is to help all others to the same self-realization.' How far do you accept this view of the relation between the individual and society?

1939 (PASS).

1. Is it true to say that the method of ethics is philosophical rather than scientific?

2. What is the object of moral judgment? Illustrate your answer by the analysis of a typical voluntary action.

3. Define hedonism, and show the difficulties, if there be any, in passing from egoistic hedonism to altruistic hedonism.

4. Discuss the value of Kant's categorical imperative as a criterion of moral life.

5. Explain the concept of self-realization and show whether it is an advance on the hedonistic interpretation of the ethical end.

6. What is the exact relation between the individual and society?

7. Immortality is taken as one of the implications of moral life. What should immortality here mean? Explain fully.

8. Should capital punishment be abolished? Give reasons for your answer.

1939 (HONOURS).

1. How is ethics related to metaphysics? Illustrate your remarks by reference to an ethical theory which bases moral principles upon metaphysics.

2. Indicate the main features of the view which holds reason to be the only motive of action. What difficulties do you find in the way of accepting such a view?

3. Give a critical estimate of Eudæmonism as a moral standard.

4. Examine Sidgwick's Intuitional Hedonism. Does it involve a vicious circle?

5. What is the source of duty? Indicate the main features of the different views which have been held on this question.

6. 'For a full self-development it is needful that we escape from the "cave" of the particular, above all, from the "cave" of our own individuality, into the freer atmosphere of the infinite and the ideal'. How far do you accept this view?

7. Does the conception of the moral ideal necessarily imply the idea of moral progress? What is your conception of moral progress?

8. How would you apply ethical principles to the solution of the following burning problems of the present day:—(a) Nationalism *versus* Internationalism, (b) Democracy *versus* Dictatorship.

APPENDIX B.

1. Nature of the Science of Ethics. (See pp. 2-4).

(a) *Prof. Muirhead's view.*

According to Prof. Muirhead, the distinction commonly drawn between theoretical and practical sciences is a superficial one. He maintains that all sciences are at once theoretical and practical, and hence there is no special reason why Ethics should be regarded and described as a practical science. Every science aims at the theoretical knowledge of something—it seeks to ascertain, explain or describe the nature of something coming within its scope, and thus far it is *theoretical* ; but, at the same time, as furnishing the basis for the scientific practice of some art, it is *practical*. Thus every science is partly theoretical and partly practical. Ethics, therefore, should not be looked upon as practical.

Criticism. The above view, while involving an element of truth, is not altogether correct. It is undoubtedly true that every science has two sides or aspects—theoretical as well as practical ; but it is equally true that some sciences (*e. g.*, Psychology, Sociology, Physiology) are more theoretical than practical, while others (*e g.*, Logic, Ethics, Politics) are more practical than theoretical. In other words, in some sciences the theoretical aspect or side is more prominent, conspicuous or striking, whereas in other sciences the practical side or aspect is more prominent, conspicuous or striking. Hence the sciences of the former group are characterised as theoretical, and those of the latter group, as practical. Now, Ethics is more practical than theoretical, for in this science the practical aspect is found to be more conspicuous. Prof. Muirhead himself admits that "Ethics stands nearer to our every day life than the other sciences." This is equivalent to the admission that it is more practical than other sciences. Ethics, therefore, may rightly be regarded as essentially a practical science. (For general criticism, see p. 4, para. 2).

(b) *Prof. Mackenzie's view.*

Prof. Mackenzie admits that there are some practical sciences, but he is of opinion that Ethics is a normative science, and not a practical one. He draws a nice and subtle distinction between normative and practical sciences in the following way: a normative science is concerned with some definite *end, ideal* or *standard*, while a practical science seeks to determine the *means* for its attainment—it deals with the practical rules or regulative principles with the help of which that end or ideal may be attained or realised. Now, Ethics deals with the supreme end of human life or the highest good of man—it is concerned with the ideal form of human conduct, character and life, and not with the means, rules or practical principles. Ethics, therefore, though normative, is not practical.

Criticism. See foot-note, p. 4. When we closely examine the characteristics of normative and practical sciences, we find that no sharp line of demarcation can be drawn between them. We find, as a matter of fact, that normative sciences become practical, and practical sciences become normative. A normative science cannot explain the end or ideal (which constitutes its subject-matter) without explaining or at least indicating the means or practical principles, and a practical science cannot explain the means or regulative principles (which constitute its subject-matter) without constant reference to the end to which they are the means. Ethics, for instance, cannot explain the supreme end of life without constant reference to moral principles, such as honesty, justice, veracity, benevolence etc., which are really means to the supreme end. Prof. Mackenzie himself is constrained to admit this here and there in his own book. (See the passage quoted from his book in page 10 of this book). Ethics, therefore, is normative as well as practical.

II. Distinction between Science and Art. Is Ethics an art?

The question may be asked : Is Ethics an art? Should it be called the 'art of conduct'? According to some writers, Ethics is both a science and an art. But Prof. Mackenzie insists that Ethics should not be described as an art. The difficulty arises from the ambiguity of the word 'art'. (a) The word 'art' is taken by some in the sense of 'a sort of knack or dexterity which is not based on an explicit knowledge of principles or laws guiding conduct'. If the word 'art' is used in this sense, then Ethics is not an art. (b) But generally, in the sphere of science and philosophy, the term 'art' is used to denote what is called a 'practical science.' Now, we know that Ethics is at once a theoretical and a practical science. Hence we may say that Ethics is an 'art' in the sense of 'a practical science', and the expression 'art of conduct' is safely admissible.

* A distinction is commonly drawn between science and art in the following way. A science is concerned with *knowledge*, while an art is concerned with *practice*. "A science teaches us to *know*, while an art teaches us *to do*." (Thomson). This distinction between Science and Art is *merely relative*, and *not absolute*. Science and Art, knowledge and practice, generally go together. It must not be supposed that in science there is no reference to practice and that in art there is no reference to knowledge. The truth is that in science the element of knowledge is prominent or conspicuous, but in art the practical aspect is predominant. A science, when practically applied, becomes an art. An art, again, (in its developed form), is based on scientific knowledge—it has a scientific basis.

It should be borne in mind that Art in its early stage or in its crude form precedes Science. An art *not* based on science is called an *empirical art*, as distinguished from a *scientific art* which is based on scientific knowledge. A scientific art is otherwise called a *practical science*. It may also be stated in this connection that the word 'Science' is sometimes used in a wide sense to mean *theoretical as well as practical sciences*, and it is sometimes taken in a narrow sense to mean *only theoretical* or *speculative science* as distinguished from practical science or scientific art.

III. Dr. Bain's moral theory.

It has been remarked in p. 157 that Hume, Bentham, James Mill, J S. Mill and Bain are supporters of Utilitarianism or Altruistic Hedonism. But Dr. Bain's theory involves certain peculiarities which distinguish it from the views of other Hedonists or Utilitarians. A general account of his view is given below.

According to Dr. Bain, morality is a rational social institution conducive to human happiness, but utility or conduciveness to happiness cannot alone constitute the moral standard. It is true, no doubt, that morally good or right acts promote the happiness of mankind, and are thus useful; but we cannot convert the proposition simply and say that all useful acts are moral. "Good roads are works of great utility, but it is not every one's duty to make them." (*Moral Science*, p. 438). What, then, is the true standard? In reply to this, Dr. Bain remarks: "A moral act is not merely an act tending to reconcile the good of the agent with the good of the whole society, *it is an act prescribed by the social authority, and rendered obligatory upon every citizen. Its morality is constituted by its authoritative prescription*, and not by its fulfilling the primary end of the social institution." (*Ibid.*, p. 456). In short, according to him, "Morality is an institution of society, maintained by the *authority and punishments of society*." (*Emotions and Will*, p. 257).

It is clear from the above that Dr. Bain's theory is a combination of the legal theory and Utilitarianism or Hedonism. He boldly declares that the consciousness of duty or moral obligation is due merely to social and political enforcement (see Ch. XVI, p. 226); and the machinery employed for enforcing useful acts consists of a duly appointed system of rewards and punishments (especially the latter). What is called conscience is "an imitation within ourselves of the government without us". (See Ch. IX, p. 130 of this book).

To sum up: according to Bain, the mere fact that an act is

useful or conducive to human happiness does not make it moral and obligatory. In order that an act may be so, it must be at the same time prescribed, enforced and supported by social authority—it must be an outcome of coercion, compulsion or constraint. Utility is not co-extensive with morality. The former is wider than the latter..

Critical remarks.

(i) Dr. Bain confounds the business and province of Ethics with those of Politics ; and his theory is an incoherent combination of the Hedonistic and legal theories of morality.

(ii) Dr. Bain affirms that morality is not an arbitrary institution. He maintains that the reason of morality is found in human happiness, the ground of enforcement in utility. This is equivalent to admitting that political and social laws are only means to an end, *viz.*, general happiness or peace and prosperity of society, and that, therefore, utility or usefulness as means to general happiness is the true standard. This would be complete Altruistic Hedonism or Utilitarianism which, though much better than the Legal Theory and Egoistic Hedonism, is open to several objections. (See Ch. XI, Sec. 7).

(iii) Dr. Bain, however, is not satisfied with thorough-going Altruistic Hedonism or Utilitarianism. He revives the Legal Theory. But, as we have found before, this theory substitutes self-interest for morality, prudence for virtue. Dr. Bain holds that utility is not sufficient to make an act moral ; its morality is constituted by its authoritative prescription and enforcement. But this view is highly objectionable. Authoritative prescription and enforcement can never confer any moral quality on an act. An act performed out of fear of punishment or in the expectation of a promised reward is only prudentially good and cannot have positive moral excellence, however beneficial it may be to society. (See Ch. X).

IV. Dr. Sidgwick's moral theory.
(Rational Utilitarianism).

A few words may also be said here about the view of Dr.

Henry Sidgwick, one of the most distinguished of recent moralists. His main works on Moral Philosophy are 'Methods of Ethics' and 'Outlines of the History of Ethics'.

Dr. Sidgwick accepts the theory of Utilitarianism or Hedonism, but he tries to found it on an intuitional basis. He attempts to reconcile Egoism and Altruism, Hedonism and Intuitionism, in his own way. As he himself says, "I could find no real opposition between Intuitionism and Utilitarianism. The Utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill seemed to me to want a basis; that basis could only be supplied by a fundamental intuition; on the other hand, the best examination I could make of the morality of common sense showed me no clear and self-evident principles except such as were perfectly consistent with Utilitarianism" (*Methods of Ethics, Preface to the sixth edition*).

Thus Dr. Sidgwick combines Hedonism with Intuitionism. He supposes that the ultimate good is pleasure or happiness, but he admits at the same time that we have an intuitive perception of fairness or equity in the distribution of the means of happiness in proportion to men's rights and merits. He rejects the doctrine of Psychological Hedonism and recognises the existence of 'disinterested' or extra-regarding impulses to action, not directed to an agent's own pleasure (p. 145 & p. 153 of this book); but he maintains that "the ultimate standard of moral valuation is the productivity of desirable consciousness, and that the only ultimate good or end in itself must be goodness or excellence of conscious life, and that the goodness of conscious life must ultimately consist in happiness or pleasantness, and that all other things called good are only means to the end of making conscious life more desirable—which is, in fact, to say that they are means to happiness". This is evidently Hedonism, for he nowhere distinguishes pleasure and happiness in the Eudæmonistic way. Yet he admits that in ordinary thought "some states of consciousness are conceived to be preferable on grounds other than their pleasantness." This means evidently that conduct or life may be valued according to some standard other than pleasure—apparently

some kind of intrinsic goodness of a special kind which can be discerned *intuitively*. He calls it 'reasonableness'; an end may be chosen, because it is reasonable in itself, whether it is pleasurable or not. The consciousness which the reasonable thing will give may be better than, and preferable to, the more pleasurable consciousness which another thing which is not reasonable may give (cf. J. S. Mill's distinction of quality and quantity of pleasure). As examples of those 'ideal objects' for which rational beings feel it obligatory to sacrifice pleasure, he mentions truth, freedom &c. The reasonableness of actions and ends as distinct from their pleasantness depends, he tells us, on "something in the conditions, concomitants and consequences". Thus, in his ethical philosophy, we discover two distinct methods of valuing or judging actions—a 'two-fold procedure' or 'a double view'. But he finally tells us that the 'objective relations,' 'the conditions, concomitants and consequences', when separated from the 'desirable consciousness' resulting from them, are not ultimately or intrinsically desirable. Thus the ultimate good and standard of valuation is "desirable consciousness", which, again, means nothing more than pleasure, happiness or agreeable feeling. To quote Dr. Sidgwick's own words: "Admitting that we have actual experience of such preferences as have just been described, of which the ultimate object is something that is not merely consciousness, it still seems to me that when we sit down in a calm moment, we can only justify to ourselves the importance that we attach to any of these objects by considering its conduciveness, in one way or another, to the happiness of conscious or sentient beings". "Several cultivated people do habitually judge that knowledge, art, etc. are ends independently of the pleasure derived from them." "Yet, if we ask for a final criterion of the comparative value of the different objects of men's enthusiastic pursuit—we shall none the less conceive it to depend on the degree in which they respectively 'conduce' to happiness".

Dr. Sidgwick then expounds those principles which, according to him, regulate the choice and distribution of the good, individual

and universal. He appeals to reason for those regulative principles. Let us consider them separately.

(i) The principle of *Prudence* or *Rational Self-love.* It is this rational principle which guides us in the choice and enjoyment of our own pleasure, happiness or sentient satisfaction in which our good consists. If we are guided by mere sensibility, and not by reason, we shall remain satisfied with momentary pleasures and be no better than lower animals. It is our reason which educates, trains and enlightens our self-love and makes it rational. It is our reason which tells us that "our good is not the pleasure of the moment, but of our total life"—it is "a good on the whole." Reason dictates "an impartial concern for all parts of our conscious life." It points out that "one ought to aim at one's own good on the whole"—that "a smaller present good is not to be preferred to a greater future good"—that "the present pleasure or happiness is *reasonably* to be foregone with the view of obtaining greater pleasure or happiness hereafter." This is the principle of *rational self-love* or *prudence*.

(ii) The principle of *Benevolence.* We have considered above the 'good on the whole' of a single individual and the principle of rational self-love, self-regard or prudence. But there is also another form of the good which, too, is declared desirable by reason, *viz.*, the universal or general good including the goods of all human—and even all sentient—existences. "To the eye of reason, there is no distinction between *meum* and *tuum*, but each individual, as equally a sentient being, has an equal right to consideration." "Here, again, just as in the former case, by considering the relation of the integrant parts to the whole and to each other, I obtain the self-evident principle that the good of any one individual is of no more importance from the point of view (if I may say so) of the Universe, than the good of any other, unless there are special grounds for believing that more good is likely to be realised in the one case than in the other. And it is evident to me that as a rational being I am bound to aim at good generally—so far as it is attainable by my efforts—not merely at

a particular part of it." (*Methods of Ethics*, Sixth Edition, p. 382).

Now, the principle that "each one is morally bound to regard the good of any other individual as much as his own" is the "maxim of Benevolence in an abstract form." It is this rational principle which guides us in the distribution of pleasure between ourselves and others. Thus, according to Sidgwick, it is reason which enables us to reconcile Egoism and Altruism—which throws a bridge over the antagonistic impulses of our nature and bids us be impartial with regard to the distribution of pleasure.

(iii) *Justice.*

The principles of Prudence and Benevolence, as explained above, are not sufficient by themselves to guide us in the precise distribution of happiness. In order that there may be a perfectly rational distribution of happiness, whether among the competing moments of the individual life or among competing individuals, it is necessary that those principles should be supplemented, modified and enlightened by Justice, Equity or Fairness which directs us to be impartial with regard to the distribution of happiness and teaches us that true impartiality does not exclude inequality, but includes it, and consists in satisfying the demands of the competitors according to their importance, merits and rights. "Instead of depressing the maximum to a rigid average, by distributing the greatest happiness equally among the greatest number of moments or of individuals, the principle of Justice directs us to aim at the greatest total happiness or the greatest happiness on the whole, whether in our experience or in that of others." (Prof. Seth, *Ethical Principles*).

To sum up: Dr. Sidgwick mixes up Utilitarianism with Intuitionism. According to him, pleasure or happiness is the only thing desirable, though it is not the only object of desire; it is the only thing worth choosing, though it is not the only thing chosen. It is the end of moral life, the absolutely good or desirable, the only ultimate criterion of ethical value. Further,

what should be aimed at as the most desirable is (i) the happiness of the whole life, and not that of passing moments; (ii) the happiness of the community, and not simply that of the individual, and (iii) the greater happiness of the more worthy. The principles of the *distribution* of pleasure or happiness, *viz.*, *prudence, benevolence and justice* are determined *rationally*, and are recognised as *self-evident* truths. The theory is known as *Rational Utilitarianism.*

Critical Remarks.

(i) Dr. Sidgwick describes the ultimate good in terms of sentiency or feeling. He regards pleasure or happiness as the absolutely good (apparently using the two terms 'pleasure' and 'happiness' as synonymous). But, as we have seen before, human nature in its concrete form is neither exclusively sentient nor exclusively rational. Hence the supreme good cannot consist merely in a state of feeling. It must consist in a progressive realisation or perfection of the total self—a harmony or equilibrium of the different sides or elements of human nature, attended by a feeling of satisfaction which may be best described as happiness or bliss (see Ch. XI, p. 156; also Ch. XV). This feeling of satisfaction may be called the *index* of moral progress, the *sense* of value resident in our object of pursuit (p. 215). It should be borne in mind that the supreme good thus conceived does not altogether exclude the enjoyment of the pleasures of life. (p. 216).

(ii) Dr. Sidgwick is unable to effect a reconciliation between Egoism and Altruism. He teaches us that Prudence and Benevolence are both rational principles—that Egoism is as reasonable as Altruism—that the rationality of self-regard is as undeniable as the rationality of self-sacrifice. But it is also an undeniable fact that Prudence sometimes conflicts with Benevolence, the egoistic with the altruistic impulses. Is the conflict apparent or real? Dr. Sidgwick seems to hold that there is a certain contradiction in the final recommendations of reason; it commands us, in the first instance, to seek our own

greatest happiness, and in the second place, the greatest happiness of others. He calls it "the Dualism of Practical Reason." In the concluding chapter of 'Methods of Ethics', he remarks, "Practical Reason would still impel us decisively to the performance of duty in the more ordinary cases in which what is recognised as duty is in harmony with self-interest properly understood. But in the rarer cases of a recognised conflict between self-interest and duty, practical reason, being divided against itself, would cease to be a motive on either side; the conflict would have to be decided by the comparative predominance of one or other of two groups of non-rational impulses" (p. 506). We thus find that he is unable to overcome 'the Dualism of Practical Reason'; the contradictory assertions of reason are left by him unreconciled.

(iii) Dr. Sidgwick's "Rational Utilitarianism" is an incoherent blending of Utilitarianism and Rational Intuitionism. As has been pointed out before in p. xxxvii, we can discover in his ethical system two distinct methods of valuing or judging actions; and these are left unreconciled. He reg[illegible] pleasure as the only good, and yet he maintains that there are [illegible] action other than pleasure. He speaks sometimes of 'pleasurableness' of objects and sometimes of their 'reasonableness', and these are apparently two different standards, as he himself seems to admit. How are we to reconcile them? He tries to purify, correct and justify Hedonism, but, as we found before when considering the theories of Mill and Spencer, an attempt to do so must lead to an abandonment of the true Hedonistic principle of pleasure as standard. Eudæmonism is the only theory which reconciles all the conflicting theories, Intuitional and Hedonistic, and incorporates into itself all that is true and essential in them (Ch. XV).

V. The moral theory of H. Spencer, Leslie Stephen and other evolutionists (Evolutional Hedonism).

(*Supplementary Note*).

The theory of Evolutional Hedonism as worked out by Spencer, L. Stephen and other evolutionists has been explained and criticised in Ch. XII, pp. 171—191. A few additional remarks are made here.

It has been said in Ch. XII, § 3, that the theory of Evolutional Hedonism has some of the glaring defects of older or Non-evolutional Hedonism or Utilitarianism. Let us explain this point clearly. A little reflection shows that, like older Utilitarianism or Non-evolutional Hedonism, Evolutional Hedonism, too, fails to justify morality—it fails to supply an adequate criterion or standard of moral conduct and an adequate ground of obligation. Like its predecessor, it is unable to reconcile Egoism and Altruism—the happiness of the individual with the interests of society. It is true that Evolutional Hedonism, in so far as it assumes that society is like an organism, is an improvement upon Non-evolutional Hedonism; but the inherent defect of Hedonism cannot be removed by simply preaching the doctrine of the organic relation of individual and society. Indeed, it is a curious consequence of Evolutional Hedonism that, if the doctrine be true, the less any one knows of it, the better it is for his moral life.

Suppose a person who is hesitating between a selfish and an unselfish action asks an evolutionist, "Why should I act unselfishly? Why should I give up my own pleasure? Why should I sacrifice myself in this way?" The only answer that can be possibly given by the evolutionist will be, "Because by such self-sacrifice or unselfish act, you contribute to the well-being of the social organism as a whole." Suppose the man asks again: "Why should I seek to contribute to the well-being of the social organism as a whole?" The answer, on principles of evolution, will be: "Because your own well-being or happiness depends

upon the well-being of the social organism, of which you are a member."

Now, it is easy to see that this view reduces unselfishness to a more refined kind of selfishness and thus becomes virtually egoistic. Here we find the inherent weakness of the theory. The difficulty which perplexes a Hedonist of the older school is just as perplexing to an advocate of Evolutional Hedonism.

The supporters of Evolutional Hedonism assert that sympathy (or, as it is sometimes called, social, altruistic or benevolent feeling) which is a product of evolution is a necessary condition of the growth of the social organism. It is this feeling which unites or holds together the different members of a society. It is this which prompts a man to perform acts that are conducive to the general well-being and deters him from performing cruel and selfish deeds. A man who yields to sympathy is morally good, because he really follows the guidance of a principle whose general tendency is to strengthen the social organism.

Now, with regard to this, it may be said that it is true that there is no rational being who has not, at least, the germs of sympathy ; yet it must be admitted that human sympathy has not yet attained such complete growth that an individual will readily accept the weal or the woe of others as his own, and consequently there is always the possibility of an antagonism between the interests of one man and those of another. Hence, as we have already said, a man's sympathy with the pleasures and pains of others will often be outweighed by his own pleasures and pains. (See p. 167 & p. 226.) As Leslie Stephen admits, "We cannot deny, without flying in the face of all experience, that, in a vast number of cases, sympathies are so feeble and intermittent as to supply no motive capable of encountering the tremendous force of downright selfishness in a torpid nature." (*Science of Ethics.*)

Moreover, there are some forms of wrong acts which inflict no appreciable pain on others and which do not affect social welfare, but whose performance promotes the agent's own

pleasure. How are we to estimate such acts on the principles of Evolutional Hedonism? Are they to be called morally innocent, if not positively good? (See pp. 167 and 168.)

Again, it is a well-known fact that, in every community, there are some unfortunate persons who, owing to some physical or mental defect, whether natural or acquired, are quite helpless and have to depend on society. There are, for instance, persons suffering from certain incurable diseases. There are the blind, the cripple, the imbecile, the insane, &c. In civilised communities they are looked upon as objects of compassion, sympathy and care, and we admire those benevolent or kind-hearted persons who endeavour to relieve their distress. The moral sense of the best men in every age and clime has laid down that such persons should be supported by society. But how are they to be dealt with according to the principles of Evolutionary Ethics? We know that, according to Ethics of Evolution, social health, welfare or well-being is the moral standard, and it is by reference to this that we can determine the rightness and wrongness of human acts. At the same time it lays down that moral calculation is unnecessary, for social evolution has provided men with sympathy or benevolence, so that those who readily yield to sympathy act rightly and are morally the best persons. Now, in accordance with this latter principle, benevolent or kind acts towards these unfortunate beings are right; yet, if any one strictly follows the Evolutionist principles, he may come to a very different conclusion. A simple, uninstructed man may implicitly obey the command of his sympathy; but a man of keen analytical intellect, well-versed in the Ethics of Evolution, may not rely on the blind guidance of his sympathy. He may prefer to find out, in accordance with the principles of Evolutional Hedonism, what is right and what is wrong, and he is quite at liberty to do so. He will judge every act by its tendency to promote or injure social well-being. Now, such a person may, if he is consistent, advocate the extirpation or destruction of these unfortunate persons instead of sympathising with them. He may say that they are of little or no use to

society and may prove injurious to social health or well-being. He will hold that "he is so well acquainted with the conditions of progress and the laws of heredity that he knows that all such variations may become injurious to the social organism, if a widely-spread feeling of sympathy for suffering should preserve them alive. Nature has decreed the destruction of the unfit, the wise man will not dissent from so prudent a decision."

We have exhibited above some logical consequences of the doctrine of Evolutional Hedonism. The truth is that, from the evolutionist standpoint, the individual, as such, has no absolute value. As D'Arcy points out, this theory "destroys the absolute ethical value of the individual. Man, as man, ceases to be an end in himself, he becomes only a means to the improvement of the type and to the building up of the community." (*A Short Study of Ethics*).

The Evolutionists, as we have seen before, appeal to the mass of altruistic tendencies that have been accumulated in the course of ages, inherited by us and strengthened by the experiences of our own life-time. According to them, transference of interest and association of ideas during the lives of our ancestors and our own lives have developed the disinterested tendencies and have made them so strong that we find greater satisfaction in being just, honest and benevolent than in being the reverse. But this theory, when carried to its logical consequence, will seriously affect the moral lives of men. When men read the Ethics of Evolution and learn how these altruistic tendencies are produced —when they learn that the end of these tendencies is the promotion of happiness, and that sometimes happiness can be attained by the violation of them, then these altruistic tendencies will lose all their binding force over their mind and will be regarded as mere illusions.

According to Spencer, "moral conduct tends to be accompanied by pleasure, immoral by pain." (*Data of Ethics*, sec. 3.) He holds that, since moral conduct is that which conduces to the welfare

of the social organism, it becomes naturally and increasingly pleasant. He speaks of the absolute coincidence of virtue and happiness—of the synthesis of moral conduct and pleasure. Now, this appears to be an ideal, almost a utopian, state. What is the present state of things ? Does moral conduct or virtuous activity now appear pleasant to all persons in all cases ? Does pain now accompany all cases of immoral conduct ? Surely not. The truth of this remark is admitted by Leslie Stephen. He says, "When we say to a man, 'This is right,' we cannot also say invariably and unhesitatingly, 'This will be for your happiness.'...By acting rightly, I admit, even the virtuous will sometimes be making a sacrifice, and I do not deny it to be a real sacrifice ; I only deny that such a statement will be conclusive for the virtuous man. His own happiness is not his sole ultimate aim" (*Science of Ethics*). See also another passage from his book quoted in p. 191 of this book.

Let us now consider the Spencerian account of duty or obligation.

This has been already explained and examined (see Ch. XII, pp. 185, 186 and 189 ; also Ch. XVI, Note on Spencer's theory, p. 230). It has been pointed out there that Spencer bases his account of obligation on that previously given by Bain. According to Dr. Bain, consciousness of duty or obligation is due to political and social enforcement. Spencer substantially accepts this view, but, as an evolutionist, he modifies it by his doctrine of heredity. Thus, according to him, the consciousness of duty or obligation involves an element of coercion or compulsion. It originates, he says, "from the experience of those several forms of restraint that have established themselves in the course of civilisation—the political, social and religious restraints." (*Data of Ethics.*) The feeling of coercion, associated with political, social and religious restraints, has been transformed into a moral restraining motive in the course of ages. We see, then, that Spencer explains the sense of obligation by the laws of association and heredity. "This sense of obligation," he says, "is transitory and will diminish as fast as moralisation increases."

This view is very admirably summed up by D'Arcy in the following words :

"The sense of obligation, the recognition of the necessity of good conduct, is merely a feeling accidentally attached to morality. When a man feels the awfulness of sin, or does his duty because to leave the duty undone would be to incur the penalty of self-condemnation, he is the victim of the tyrants and priests who oppressed his ancestors. His ancestors trembled at the thought of the punishments which would be inflicted upon them if they transgressed the commandment. He trembles, because the old association between transgression and fear is ingrained in his mental constitution. Duty is the ghost of primeval compulsion. 'As moralisation increases', the ghost fades out of sight, and the man does his duty, because he finds it is the way to get most life or most happiness for the community and for himself." (*A Short Study of Ethics*, pp. 259, 260.)

The theory has been briefly criticised before. (See p. 189.) It will be sufficient here to state the following points :—

(i) Political, social and religious enforcements cannot constitute the final explanation of what is morally obligatory, for the reasons for such enforcements (in so far as these enforcements are rational) must ultimately rest on the unsophisticated moral consciousness of man.

(ii) The theory affects morality seriously. If the theory were true, the less any man knew of it, the better it would be for his moral life. When a man is actuated by a sense of duty or moral obligation, he will perform noble deeds ; but a man who accepts the evolutionary account will look upon obligation as a mere superstition or as an illusion and will cease to be actuated by it. As D'Arcy rightly points out, "If the sense of obligation is the result of an accidental association—a result, too, which must disappear with the progress of knowledge and civilisation—what is there to make or to justify a moral hero or martyr? What is there to control hot passions when the law commands ? What is there to stimulate to great endeavours when the 'right' course is clearly

seen? The man who is so simple and uninstructed that he takes the voice of duty for a Divine voice speaking through his own reason with an imperative which he cannot disregard without self-condemnation, will do great deeds. But the man who is so well acquainted with ethical science that he knows the imperative to be but a far-off echo of the command of the tyrant and the priest, will have but little to move him to obedience in the face of difficulty internal or external." (*Ibid.*, p. 260.)

VI. Kant's view as to the relation of morality and religion. Postulates of Practical Reason.

We have briefly explained in Ch. II the view of Kant regarding the relation of morality and religion. A few additional remarks are made here.

In his 'Critique of Pure Theoretical Reason' Kant asserts that metaphysical knowledge is unattainable. He says in it that the 'things-in-themselves' or realities are unknown and unknowable. He thus far speaks like an agnostic. (See Epistemology in General Philosophy). But in his 'Critique of Practical Reason' he maintains that 'practical reason' supplies us with metaphysical ideas and beliefs. According to him, our practical or moral reason compels us to assume or postulate the existence of God, the immortality of human soul, and the freedom of human will. These are called by him 'postulates of practical or moral reason.'

We see, then, that, according to Kant, the existence of God is a postulate of moral reason. Our moral consciousness demands that there should be perfect coincidence between virtue and happiness, and between vice and pain. In other words, our moral reason or conscience gives us the intuitive conviction that virtue should lead to happiness and vice to pain. But it is a fact of experience that the coincidence between virtue and happiness, and that between vice and pain, are not always met with in this life. We do not find in this world that the virtuous

are necessarily happy. On the contrary, we often find that the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper. Hence we are constrained to postulate and believe that there is a Supreme Being —a moral governor of the world—who will ultimately reward the virtuous with happiness and punish the vicious with misery.*

Now, this belief is the essence of religion. Hence, according to Kant, religion springs from morality, and Ethics is the ground, basis or foundation of Theology. (See Ch. II).

VII. Voluntary action.

(*Supplementary Notes*).

(*a*) *Resolution as a factor of voluntary action. Meaning of the term Resolution.*

We have exhibited in Ch. IV the different elements or factors involved in a voluntary action. It has been pointed out in that chapter that, in a complex voluntary act, the state of deliberation is followed by choice, selection or decision and resolution. A distinction is often drawn between choice or decision and resolution. Resolution means the mental determination to do afterwards what has already been decided—to follow in future a course of action already chosen or selected. It is, in fact, the determined attitude of mind to adhere to a decision until it is acted upon or carried out. A decision may instantly pass into action, thus affording no scope for resolution. But, as is well known, the realisation of a chosen end may not take place immediately. In such a case, the agent has to form a

* For a full account of the postulates of practical reason, see History of Philosophy. See also Kant's 'Critique of Practical Reason.' It may be added here that Kant bases his belief in free will solely on moral grounds. 'Thou *oughtest* implies thou *canst*.' "The moral law, in its very nature, demands the actuality of freedom. It calls upon me to will and to act unconditionally, without regard to any considerations save the moral 'ought'; and it has no meaning unless, what I *ought* to do, I *can* do". (*Rogers' History of Philosophy*, pp. 484, 485).

'resolution' or 'determination' to stick to his decision, so that he may not be diverted from it by a contrary desire.*

We see, then, that resolution is necessary where the carrying out of the action decided upon is postponed through the nature of the circumstances. It enters into every voluntary action which involves a prolonged activity, that is, a series of movements. It presupposes 'firmness' or 'strength of mind.' It involves an exercise of what is called 'self-control'. It may be of various degrees of strength. A man who has to perform his duties in the face of strong temptations or in the midst of dangers and difficulties or in spite of sarcasms and criticisms, must have an exceptional power of resolution or determination. Resoluteness or firmness of will, though a noble quality, may take an exaggerated and hurtful form. It may degenerate into what is called 'obstinacy' or 'self-will.' There are some persons who do not reconsider their decisions under any circumstance and who reject all counsels and suggestions coming from others. Such obstinacy or rigidity of resolution is to be condemned as irrational. As Prof. Sully remarks, "The wise man combines firmness in ruling principles with a certain modifiability in particular decisions." (*Outlines of Psychology*, p. 427).

(*b*) *Self-control.*

A few words may be said in this connection about what is known as 'self-control.' The details belong to Psychology.

By the term 'self-control' we mean 'self-regulation', 'self-command', 'control exercised over one's self'. It implies the agent's control over his mental states and processes—his regu-

* As examples of resolution, we may mention the following cases: A gentleman may decide in the morning to pay a visit in the afternoon. A student may resolve to-day to prepare thoroughly for an examination, and to appear at it. Dr. Bain thus explains the nature of resolution: "When the action suggested by a motive or a concurrence of motives cannot immediately commence, the intervening attitude is called Resolution." "The state thus denominated is not a state of absolute quiescence or indifference. There is an activity engendered at once, the preliminary to the proper action; an attitude of waiting and watching the time and circumstances for commencing the course decreed."

lation of his own feelings, thoughts and actions. Self-control has both a *positive* or *stimulative* and a *negative* or *inhibitory* aspect. The first is illustrated when a man *does a difficult action*, for example, leaps out of his warm bed on a cold wintry night at the call of duty. The second is illustrated when an agent *restrains* or *checks* an impulse to act or decides *not* to do a thing for some reason or other, *e. g.*, when he *declines a tempting invitation*.

We see, then, that self-control may be exercised or manifested either in the positive form of persistence and performance, or in the negative form of desistence. An agent may persist in a difficult course—he may perform a difficult task—he may undertake what is unattractive or disagreeable. In such cases what is called 'positive self-control' is manifested. Again, a person may desist from an attractive course—he may refrain from what is tempting or agreeable. This illustrates the negative form of self-control.

Further, self-control has three phases, *viz.*, control of feelings, control of thoughts and control of actions. All the three functions or faculties may be regulated or controlled, and thus self-control assumes the three forms just mentioned. Each of them may be positive or negative. In other words, control of thought, or of feeling, or of action may be illustrated either in the positive or in the negative form, as described above.* Let us briefly consider them one by one.

(i) *Control of thought.* Thought can be controlled through the control, regulation or direction of attention. We may direct our attention to a particular idea, thus making it sufficiently distinct, vivid and intense. Again, we may withdraw our attention from an idea, and then it will grow faint and less powerful. Indeed, by a due regulation of the process of attention

* Our thoughts, feelings as well as activities may be either stimulated or repressed, *i. e.*, either promoted or inhibited. Hence self-control has positive as well as negative aspects.

we may hope to control and carry on effectively the different processes of thought.*

(ii) *Control of feelings or emotions.* These can be controlled indirectly through the medium of muscular and intellectual control. We know that emotions are conditioned partly by bodily movements and partly by ideas. Hence they may be controlled partly through the control of bodily movements or the muscles involved and partly through the due regulation of the constituent ideas. If the outward expression or movement be allayed, arrested or suppressed, the corresponding feeling, too, *if moderate*, may be allayed, weakened or extinguished. † Again, feelings can be controlled through the control of the connected ideas. If, for instance, we divert our attention to something else, the connected feeling will be greatly weakened or entirely suppressed.

(iii) *Control of action.* Actions may be controlled partly through the control of the inner springs and partly through the control of the muscles engaged. Control of outward action mainly supposes the control of the inward states and processes out of which the outward action springs or arises.

The three forms of self-control, just indicated above, are intimately related to one another. As is well known, there is a two-fold relation subsisting among the three fundamental factors, elements or faculties of human mind, *viz.*, (i) the relation of inter-dependence or mutual implication and (ii) that of antagonism or opposition. Now, in so far as these elements are inter-dependent,

* If a student, for the sake of knowledge, deliberately concentrates his attention on a particular subject to the disregard of other and attractive matters, he exercises what is called thought-control (positive and negative).

It should be remembered that positive control of thought is impossible without its negative control. Similarly, the negative control of thought requires its positive control. When we try to fix our mind on a certain relevant idea, we have to shut out or exclude irrelevant ideas.

† "When, however, a feeling is very strong or intense, suppression of the outward expression is scarcely of any avail; it may even work in the opposite direction; instead of weakening or quenching the feeling, it may intensify it." (Prof. A. C. Mitra, *Elements of Psychology*). See the criticism of Lange-James theory of emotion in Psychology.

the control of one naturally effects or helps the control of the rest ; in other words, the stimulation or repression of the one helps respectively the stimulation or repression of the others. Again, in so far as they are mutually opposed, the promotion or inhibition of the one helps respectively the inhibition or promotion of the rest.

It may be stated in this connection that the power of self-control is gradually developed with the development of reason during the life-time of an individual. The development of the powers of deliberation, intelligent choice and resolution lead to the exercise of self-control. The control of impulses etc., presupposes the growth and knowledge of certain rational principles of conduct for the sake of, or in conformity to, which they are controlled. A person, for instance, may think it proper to restrain his sensual propensity for the sake of some principle, say, the preservation of health. Self-control reaches its culminating point when the agent renounces the pleasures of life for the sake of a high ideal.

We have given above a general psychological account of the nature of self-control. It should be carefully borne in mind that self-control is of immense importance from the ethical standpoint. It is essential to the *purity* of our moral life. It is one of the conditions and marks of moral progress. The moral character of a person cannot be improved or adequately developed without a proper regulation of his thoughts, feelings and desires. Self-realisation or a harmonious development of human nature involves self-control, both in its positive and negative forms. (See Ch. VIII, p. 113 ; Ch. XIV, pp. 201 and 202 ; Ch. XV ; Ch. XXIII and Ch. XXIV). No man is great and good that does not practise self-control. †

* It should be borne in mind that the power of self-control grows by *exercise*. Self-control implies a *dual* self—the higher and the lower—the higher seeking to control the lower. (See Eudæmonism.)

† As Prof. Mitra points out, "self-control, to be effective, should be comprehensive, covering our intellectual, emotional and volitional tendencies. We should forbid our thoughts to travel in unholy regions, prevent our feelings from being directed towards unworthy objects, and restrain our desires for evil things." (*Elements of Morals.*)

VIII. Non-voluntary movements.

We have given before a brief account of the principal classes of non-voluntary actions. (See Ch. IV). We now proceed to consider them further and to illustrate them with concrete examples.

(*a*) *Spontaneous or random actions.*

These actions are the outcome of energy stored in the system. As pointed out in p. 41, they are really the results of spontaneous outflow of energy from nerve-centres. Hence they are called spontaneous actions. Their characteristics are indicated below:— (*i*) They are prompted or excited, not by any stimulation from without, but wholly by the energy accumulated within. In this they are marked off from reflex movements. (*ii*) "They are adapted to results beneficial to the system The beneficial results include not merely the relief and pleasure of exercise, but also the healthy development of the nerves and muscles. It is by these at first random movements, that the infant gradually acquires the use of its muscles and limbs, and that the way is prepared, not only for the more complex movements of instinct, but also for voluntary movement proper". (Stephen). (*iii*) They are non-voluntary in character, for, though they are adapted to beneficial results, as said above, the adaptations are wholly unintentional. These acts are not preceded by ideas either of the movements or of the beneficial results thereof.*

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* The question may be asked: are spontaneous actions psychically initiated? In other words, do they arise out of any prior psychical or conscious state? Prof. Sully holds that they are *physiologically*, and *not psychically*, initiated. According to him, they "arise through what has been called the automatic excitation of the central substance.......Their most striking characteristic is the absence of all psychical initiation" (*Outlines*, p.879). But a careful study of these acts suggests that they arise out of vague feeling of uneasiness, and are thus psychically originated. If an attempt is made to suppress the spontaneous movements of a child, it begins to cry. This seems to indicate that the accumulation of energy within the system gives rise to a feeling of uneasiness out of which the spontaneous act springs. As

To sum up: spontaneous movements are the products of the natural flow of energy from motor centres. The energy accumulated within finds outlet in certain organic movements known as spontaneous acts. These actions are not excited by external stimulation. They are not preceded by any conception either of the movements or of the results. The movements are beneficial, and serve the purpose of physical exercise.

Illustrations of this class of activities are found in 'some of the earliest movements of the infant, as stretching out the arms, the legs, rolling the eyes on waking while the lids are still closed, and so on' (Sully). 'Dancing, romping, and running due to exuberance of energy in the case of vigorous children' are typical instances of such movements.

(*b*) *Reflex actions.*

A reflex act consists in automatic response to sensory stimulation. It is a simple, non-voluntary act performed promptly in response to a sensory stimulus. A stimulus acts on the organic system, causes an incoming current and thereby a shock of sensation, and the sensation is immediately followed by an outgoing current and a movement. The stimulus may be an external object (in the sense of an extra-organic object, *i. e.*, something outside the body), as in the case of withdrawing the hand at the touch of something very hot or cold; or it may be some organic disturbance, some sudden change in the organism itself, as in the case of sneezing, coughing, &c.

Dr. Stephen remarks, "In young creatures especially, and to some extent in all, energy accumulates of itself in the motor centres, and, as long as it is unused and repressed, gives rise to a feeling of uneasiness; and this feeling resulting from the accumulation of repressed energy, operates as an impulse to discharge in the form of out-going nerve-currents and movements. These movements give both the satisfaction of relief from painful repression and the positive pleasure of muscular exercise, and these feelings further stimulate and prolong the movements for a time." (*Analytical Psychology*, 3rd edition, p. 496.)

It is clear from the above that, in the case of every reflex action, there must be (*i*) a sensory stimulus, (*ii*) a sensation, and (*iii*) a motor reaction, or a reaction in the shape of bodily movement. "Here there are two nerve currents : the sensory and the motor, the former conditioning the latter. In spontaneous movement there is the motor current alone, due to the release of energy from the centres."

We have given above some examples of reflex movements. Some other instances may be cited here, such as, starting at a sound, turning aside the face abruptly from a dazzling light, closing the eye-lids when something suddenly approaches, or is brought very near, the eyes.

We proceed now to consider briefly the main characteristics of reflex action. (*i*) A reflex act is marked by *simplicity*. It consists in a single movement or a short series of movements. It is thus very simple, as compared with an instinctive act or a voluntary one. (*ii*) It is evoked or prompted by a *sensory stimulus*. (*iii*) It is *psychically initiated* or *originated*. It arises out of a prior psychical phenomenon known as sensation. Before recoiling at the touch of something very hot or cold, a person must have a sharp sensation of pain. (*iv*) It is *non-voluntary*, *unintentional* or *automatic* in character, as it is devoid of antecedent purpose. It is not guided by the thought of the end or the result and the means. Although the reflex act is adapted to a special and beneficial result, there is no prevision of the result.* As Prof. H. Stephen remarks, "Between the stimulus and the reaction, there is time for sensation, but not for thought" (*Analytical Psychology*, p. 498). Hence it is said that a reflex act is *sensori-motor*, and *not ideo-motor*. (*v*) A reflex act is *uniform* or *mechanical in character*—"the same motor response always occurring when the particular sensory stimulus recurs" (Sully).

ance, a person accidentally brings his hand in contact with a sharp point or a hot glass, he withdraws it *at once* with a spasmodic start, *without having any time for thought or intention.*

(*vi*) A reflex act is marked by *quickness of response*. The sensation is *at once* followed by a motor reaction.

A distinction should be drawn in this connection between conscious and spinal reflexes. We have explained and illustrated *conscious reflexes* in the preceding paragraphs. Conscious reflexes are so called, because they are attended with consciousness, the sensory and motor stages both giving rise to sensations more or less distinct. They are otherwise known as *sensori-motor or psychical reflexes*. *Spinal reflexes* are purely physiological facts, unaccompanied by any form of consciousness. They are sometimes called *excito-motor*, *physiological* or *unconscious* reflexes. As examples of spinal reflexes we may mention the action of the lungs in breathing, the action of the stomach in digestion, and the like. They are carried on by the lower organs of the nervous system—the spinal cord, medulla and cerebellum—without direct dependence on the cerebrum.

Before concluding this subject we may add that certain habitual actions take on a reflex character—they become uniform and mechanical like reflex ones, being called forth by appropriate circumstances.

(*c*) *Instinctive action.* A general account of the nature of instinctive action has been given in Ch. IV, p. 41. An instinct is an untaught aptitude, beneficial to the individual and the species. As Prof. H. Stephen remarks, "It is the innate power and the tendency or inclination to perform a long and complicate series of actions as means to produce a definite future result which is essential to the preservation either of the individual itself or

*As Prof. Sully remarks, "Acquired voluntary movements themselves tend by repetition and by the lapsing of the element of conscious purpose to take on a reflex character. Many of our demonstrably acquired movements, *e.g.*, brushing away a fly from the face, putting out a hand to stop an object approaching us, offering our hand in response to the invitation of another's outstretched hand, have this reflex or sensori-motor character." (*Outlines of Psychology*, p. 860.)

of its race, prompted probably by a feeling of uneasiness from within, but without any explicit idea or knowledge beforehand, of that result or of the means of attaining it." (*Analytical Psychology*).

From the above statement it is evident that an instinctive action is a highly complex impulsive act which subserves a definite purpose, but which is performed without any foresight. It is a marvellous adjustment or adaptation of means to an unforeseen or unanticipated definite end.

Instincts are extensively met with in animal life. As pointed out in p. 41, instinctive tendencies are found most explicitly in lower animals and are specially expressed in the activities displayed by them in seeking food, in defending themselves and in attacking enemies, in the construction of dwellings, and in making provisions for the young. Thus, we find that, immediately after their birth, mammals suck their mothers' breasts, and birds run about in search of food, sometimes as soon as they are freed from egg-shells ; we also see that bees construct their hives, spiders spin their webs, birds build their nests, beavers construct their dams and dwellings, with remarkable skill. They perform these acts apparently without any forethought in obedience to the instincts implanted in them by nature.

We proceed now to indicate briefly the main characteristics of instinct.

(i) An instinct is not only a *power*, but also a *tendency* or *inclination*.

(ii) Instinctive powers and tendencies are *not acquired*. They are *natural, innate, inborn* or *connate*. They are thus present in creatures from the very beginning of their lives.

(iii) An instinct is usually expressed in a long and complicated series of movements (*e.g.*, the building instinct of the beaver).

(iv) An instinctive act arises out of a feeling of uneasiness due to some organic want or need. "The want may be a want of what is needful for the preservation of the creature itself, as

in the case of the spider constructing its web, the bees their hive, the beaver its dam, but in many cases it is a want of what is needful for the preservation of its offspring and species after its own death."

(v) Instinctive movements are adjusted as means to ends without any prevision of the ends. Such movements are admirable, unerring adaptations of means to future and perhaps distant ends ; but they do not imply any previous experience or training. The adaptations are, therefore, *non-voluntary*, *non-purposive*, *unintentional*.

(vi) The acts are thus characterised by 'biological purposiveness'. Instincts are essentially necessary for the preservation not only of the individuals, but also of the species.*

(*d*) *Imitative actions.* By 'imitation' we mean the copying or reproduction of the action or behaviour of another. Imitation may be either voluntary or non-voluntary. Here we have to deal with the non-voluntary or automatic form of imitation. This is found in animals, in infants, and, to some extent, even in adults. Thus, a parrot imitates the voices it hears ; a child imitates the movements of adults. As is well known, infants automatically reproduce the actions, gestures, looks and utterances of others. When, for instance, a child sees others laughing, weeping, or even pretending to weep, he begins to laugh or weep.

Imitation is an important instrument of mental development. The power of imitative reproduction forms the first stage in the education of every individual, human and animal. The mimetic impulse is very strong in early years and often finds expression in play. It should be borne in mind that, though imitative reproduction is at first automatic and unintentional, it gradually becomes more and more conscious and deliberate. Automatic

* The term 'instinct' has been taken here in a narrow or restricted sense. It is sometimes used in a very wide sense to signify any connate psycho-physical tendency.

imitation is *non-moral.* Voluntary imitation is *moral* (in the wider sense), *i. e.*, it is an object of moral judgment.*

(*e*) *Ideo-motor action.* An ideo-motor action means a non-voluntary movement which is induced by 'motor representation' or the idea of the movement without the co-operation of will and sometimes against the will or inclination. It is an instance of an idea automatically passing into action. We find this kind of action illustrated when a spectator witnessing rope-dancing automatically imitates and performs some of the balancing movements of the rope-dancer. Again, if a person visiting a foot-ball game automatically kicks the ground when a player is expected to kick the ball, we find another instance of such action.

Ideo-motor movements are illustrated in two main forms :—

(*i*) In some cases they are due to the working of 'fixed ideas' or vivid representations, as when a man leaps from a precipice under the influence of a strong persistent idea. †

(*ii*) Some ideo-motor actions are imitative in character ; *e. g.*, a spectator imitates automatically the balancing movements of a rope-walker. The movements of the rope-dancer excite motor ideas in the mind of the spectator, and these ideas automatically pass into movements.‡

(*f*) *Habit.*

We have already explained briefly the nature and ethical significance of habit. By the term 'habit' we mean the capacity and tendency resulting from frequent repetition of the same

* Voluntary imitation appears somewhat late in the human child. It is a conscious or deliberate process in which the representation of a movement is followed by its execution. Thus, adults imitate the fashion set before them. For details, see Psychology.

† A 'fixed idea' is a persistent idea, an idea persisting and growing predominant in the mind, which excludes other ideas for the time being and passes into action, independently of the will.

‡ The term 'Ideo-motor' has been taken in this book in its usual sense. Ideo-motor actions literally mean 'movements prompted by ideas'. If we take the expression in this literal and wide sense, then even voluntary acts may be called 'ideo-motor', for, as we know, voluntary actions are prompted by ideas of means and ends.

act.* It implies the *tendency* to perform (as well as the *aptitude* and *facility* of performing) a certain action, acquired by a person through repetition. Thus a habit is formed by repeated and uniform practice.

Habits are usually the outcome of repeated voluntary activities.† When a voluntary act is repeatedly performed, a progressive facility is acquired in it, until, in the long run, it becomes quite automatic. A voluntary action requires at first the guidance of thought and effort of will; but if the act is repeated again and again, it becomes easier and easier and requires less and less attention and effort, and ultimately comes to be performed mechanically, without thought or even consciousness. In this way the act becomes at last a *habitual act*.

As examples of habits, we may mention the habits of writing, drawing, singing, dancing, dressing, riding, swimming, and the like. The adaptations required in them are deliberate or voluntary in the case of beginners, but are quite automatic in the case of veterans. These acts involve complicate combinations of movements which require at first many trials and prolonged effort of attention, but at last become automatic and almost unconscious.

*. The term 'habit' has been used here in a narrow sense. In this sense it is restricted to the active phase of human mind. In the wide sense, it means any fixed or settled tendency—intellectual, emotional or volitional—acquired through repetition. As Prof. Sully remarks, "In a wide sense habit includes *all* the results of repetition and practice." (*Outlines of Psychology*, p. 404.) Thus, we sometimes speak of habits of thought and feeling.

† It may be pointed out in this connection that non-voluntary movements may also be transformed into habits. Typical habits are the products of rational will or voluntary activity. But some habits formed in early life are the results of spontaneous movements, automatic imitation etc., which are non-voluntary in character. As Prof. Stephen says, "Actions at first random will, after several repetitions, become habitual. Instinctive and reflex actions will become more mechanical by accumulation of traces. In early life many habits originate in automatic imitation. Children imitate the language, tones, looks, manners of those around them until the reproduction becomes an unconquerable habit. The most remarkable case of habit perhaps is the acquisition of language—involving spontaneous, imitative, and purposive efforts combined" (*Psychology*, p. 511).

The foregoing remarks make it clear that habitual actions are *mechanical*, *automatic* or *non-voluntary* in character.* If a habit is firmly fixed, the appropriate or definite movement is promptly and easily performed when the occasion arises. The stronger a habit, the greater is the difficulty experienced in eradicating or even modifying it. Hence habit is called 'the second nature.' †

We have seen above that habitual acts are *non-voluntary*. But still they are objects of moral judgment (See Ch. IV, p. 43 ; p. 57 ; also Ch. VI, p. 77). It should be borne in mind that habit plays an important part in the formation of character. (See Ch. XXIII, § 1). 'Man is a bundle of habits,' as the proverb says. It is said that a good man is he who has acquired certain good or virtuous habits, and a bad man is one who has contracted evil or vicious habits. All our habits, good or bad, are formed by repetition. When a man, therefore, does something wrong, he should take care *not* to repeat it, for then a bad habit is sure to take root, though he may not be clearly conscious

* Habitual actions are called *secondarily* automatic, because, as already pointed out, habits are *acquired*, and *not original*. (See p. 43, footnote).

† We have given above some examples of habitual acts involving muscular dexterity. As already remarked, all acquired capacities and tendencies or inclinations are called habits (*e.g.*, the habits of early rising, punctuality, temperance). Habits may give rise to periodic wants with cravings for their satisfaction (*e.g* , the habits of smoking, taking opium, drinking). Persons who have contracted such habits grow restless if the wants are not satisfied in time. It may be added here that habits may be formed with regard to detached acts or with regard to a series of successive acts. The latter constitutes what is generally called 'routine'. "The man of routine," as Prof. Sully remarks, "goes through the whole cycle of his avocations largely under the lead of habit. The whole series of his daily pursuits, the rising and dressing, breakfasting, going to the place of business, and so forth, tends to get welded into a single chain of actions." (*Outlines of Psychology*, p. 406). In the case of a man of routine, the habits assume the character of appetites, giving rise to periodic wants,

of it. When habits are firmly fixed, it is extremely difficult to uproot or modify them. If a person has somehow contracted an evil habit, he should try his best to check it before it becomes inveterate.

Before concluding this subject, we may point out once more that education aims at forming good habits and correcting bad ones. (See Ch. XXI).

IX. Rights and duties.

The word 'duty' means what is *due, i. e.*, what one is *bound* or *under an obligation* to do. In other words, a duty means what we *ought* to perform as moral beings. We have duties towards ourselves as well as towards other persons. A *right* means what one can justly claim. Duties and rights are correlative. If it is the duty of one person to do something in relation to another person, then that other person has a *right* to its performance or being done, *e. g.*, the duties of children imply rights in parents, the duties of servants imply rights in masters, and so on. The most general moral right which a personal being possesses is the right of self-preservation and self-development. Every person as such has the moral right to preserve himself, to use and enjoy the fruits of his own labour, to educate himself and thereby to develop and perfect his nature. In short, he has the right of self-realisation (in so far as it is consistent with the same right in others), and it is the duty of others to see that their actions do not hinder his self-realisation.

We see, then, that duties and rights imply each other. A duty in one corresponds to a right in another. "What one has a right to claim, it will be the duty of others to do." Every person has duties to perform in relation to others, and he has a right to expect and demand that others will perform their duties towards him. Every person has a moral right to claim that he shall be treated as a *person*, *i. e.*, as a being who exists in some measure *for* himself with an end or good of his own, and not merely as a means towards the ends of others, and it is his duty to remember that those others are likewise persons and ends

in themselves, with rights of their own, and to treat them as such, and not merely as passive instruments for promoting his own pleasure, welfare or good.* How, then, do such reciprocal rights and duties arise? A little reflection is sufficient to show that they arise from the nature of human personality and the organic nature of society—the relations of personal beings to one another as members of the social organism. The members of a society are *persons*, *i.e.*, self-conscious and self-controlled realities having relatively independent existences of their own. They thus exist *for* themselves or are ends in themselves and have accordingly certain fundamental *rights*. At the same time, they are *finite* beings and exist as *members*, *factors* or *organs* of the organic whole called society. They exist, therefore, not wholly and solely for themselves, but also for the sake of others or as means towards the ends of others and the whole, and have accordingly *duties*. Indeed, human society is a system of relations consisting of such relations as those of husband and wife, parent and child, teacher and pupil, master and servant, ruler and subject, physician and patient, lawyer and client, buyer and seller; and the various rights and duties of men arise out of such relations.

To sum up: The relations of persons in society give rise to moral rights and duties. Rights and duties are reciprocal or correlative. They imply each other. Our duties or obligations imply other persons' rights, and our rights imply other persons' obligations or duties. Thus we see that two parties are concerned in moral obligation, *viz.*, the party that is obliged or bound to perform a duty and the party that has a right to demand its performance. The duties of servants, for instance, imply rights in masters, and the duties of masters imply rights of servants.

* Hence the essence of moral law may be stated thus:—

1. "Be a person, and respect others as persons." (Hegel).

2. "Act so as to treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of others, always as an end and never merely as a means." (Kant).

X. Forms of Moral Quality.

(a) Formal and material rightness or goodness.

A distinction is sometimes drawn between *formal* and *material goodness*. An act is said to be *formally good or right*, if it springs out of a good, virtuous or noble *motive*; while an act, although not the outcome, expression or consequence of a good motive, is regarded as *materially good or right*, if it leads to good, felicific or beneficial *results*. In other words, if an act is the outcome of a good motive, it is taken to be formally right; if it is beneficial in its results, effects or consequences—if it is conducive to the good, well-being or welfare of others, it is looked upon as materially good (though it may not be the outcome of a virtuous motive).

We see, then, that the formal goodness or rightness of an act is determined by its mental antecedent—by its inner spring or motive, while its material rightness is dependent upon its actual outward results.

The above distinction was originally drawn by the schoolmen or scholastic philosophers of the middle ages.* According to them, formal goodness is connected with the mental stage of an act—with desire and motive, while material goodness, with the actual result or effect. They hold that an act may be materially good, though not formally; or it may be formally right, but not materially so.

Criticism. But the above view is open to a grave objection. The scholastic distinction between formal and material goodness is untenable from the ethical point of view. What is called 'material goodness' is no moral excellence at all—it is really outside the scope of moral judgment. There is no moral quality in a voluntary action *per se* or its consequence, apart

* As Hutcheson remarks, "An action is *materially* good, when, in fact, it tends to the interest of the system, so far as we can judge of its tendency, or to the good of some part consistent with the system, whatever were the affections of the agent. An action is *formally* good when it flowed from good affection in a just proportion".

from the agent's entire complex *intention* (which includes his motive). The real seat of moral quality is the internal aspect or mental stage of a voluntary act, and not the stage of external consequences. However beneficial the results or effects of an act may be, it can never be pronounced as *morally* good or right unless the motive (and, in fact, the whole intention) be good. (*Vide* Ch. VI, § 2).

(b) Subjective and objective rightness.

A similar distinction between subjective and objective rightness has been drawn by Dr. Sidgwick and some other modern writers. What is called 'subjective rightness' is determined by an agent's personal view, opinion or conviction; while the objective rightness of an act is determined by the actual beneficial results, effects or consequences brought about by it. As Dr. Sidgwick remarks, "Conduct may be objectively wrong, though subjectively right; and we continually judge conduct to be objectively wrong because it tends to cause pain and loss of happiness to others—apart from any effect on the subjective rightness of the volitions". (Methods of Ethics, 6th edition, pp. 394, 395). Similarly, Prof. Mackenzie observes, "The subjectively right is generally understood to mean what appears right to the individual who is acting, while the objectively right means that which actually does tend to realize the good". (Manual of Ethics, sixth edition, p. 228). Elsewhere he remarks, "An action may be said to be subjectively right when it is right according to the best judgment that a particular individual is capable of forming at any given time". (*Ibid.*, p. 233).

It is clear from the above that an action is regarded as objectively right, if it is productive of good, beneficial or felicific results.

Criticism.

A little reflection is sufficient to convince us that the distinction between subjective and objective rightness is highly objectionable from the moral standpoint. The so-called 'objective

rightness or goodness' of an action (apart from its 'subjective rightness') is no moral quality at all.* The stage of consequence taken by itself is devoid of moral significance. The real object of moral judgment is the agent's intention, and not the external consequences, results or effects of his action. It is not enough that a good or beneficial result is actually produced by an action ; it is necessary to enquire whether that good result was *anticipated* and *intended*, before we can judge the action as right or praiseworthy †.

The foregoing remarks make it clear that the expression 'objective rightness' is not a happy one. We may go so far as to say that both the expressions 'subjective' and 'objective' rightness (or subjective and objective *morality*) are inappropriate and misleading. They may give rise to much confusion of thought. Let us first consider the expression 'subjective morality or rightness'. It is easy to see that moral rightness is never wholly subjective. It is never a matter of mere arbitrary subjective opinion or belief. There is an 'objective', 'universal' and 'immutable' element in morality. Take, again, the expression 'objective morality'. The so-called 'objective morality' of an act is meaningless apart from the 'subjective'. In fact, morality may be said to be essentially subjective in the sense that it is intelligible only by reference to the subjective states and processes of a rational mind. The moral character of a voluntary action is determined, not by the external consequences thereof, but by the desire, deliberation and decision of the agent—by his motive and intention. Taken apart from mental antecedents, human actions with their consequences would be as devoid of moral significance as the effects produced by physical causation or the impulsive activities of lower animals.

* This is virtually admitted by Dr. Sidgwick when he remarks that the "moral sense of mankind regards the subjective rightness of an action as more important than the objective" (*Ibid.*, p. 208).

† As Prof. Mackenzie remarks, "We do not judge an act by its result, but by the purpose of the agent." (*Ibid.*, p. 106).

To sum up: The distinction between 'subjective' and 'objective' rightness (as drawn by Dr. Sidgwick) is not tenable from the strictly ethical point of view. The so-called 'objective rightness' is no moral excellence; it is outside the moral sphere. Indeed, the expression 'objective morality' is a misnomer.* Morality is subjective as well as objective. Morality is subjective; for apart from mental determinations, morality loses its import or significance. But it is not *wholly* subjective. It is not a matter of mere subjective opinion or belief—not an arbitrary creation of human mind. It involves an objective and universal element. Every moral law is affirmed to be an objective and universal truth, *i. e.*, a truth which is regarded as valid for all similar persons in similar circumstances. Moral distinctions are *necessary* and *immutable.* †

XI. Can obligation be transcended?

We proceed now to discuss another question that has been the subject of much controversy: Can obligation be transcended? The question is often put in the following ways: Can

* It may be pointed out in this connection that the expression 'objective rightness or morality' is sometimes used to signify 'the moral order of Nature'—'Providential regulation of events according to the principles of wisdom, justice and benevolence".—'The fitness of things and events as determined by the Ethical Principle or Moral power at work in Nature.'

† Prof. Mackenzie raises here another question: Are all actions objectively right? In reply to this he remarks that, if a thoroughly optimistic view of the world be taken, it must be held that all things 'work for good', and it may be contended that this implies that every action is objectively right. But he points out that, as moral beings, we cannot adopt this stand-point. "The objectively right, from our point of view, must be taken to mean what leads to good, so far as human knowledge enables us to judge. ......From the ethical point of view, it seems best to interpret the objectively right as meaning what on the whole leads to more good than evil, so far as the best available human knowledge at the time enables us to determine." (*Ibid.*, p. 280),

we rise above duty? Is it possible for a person to do more than his duty? Is it possible to do something which is not enjoined as a duty, and yet is meritorious?

Now, the term 'duty' is sometimes used popularly in a narrower sense to mean simply what is legally binding or obligatory upon an individual, and an individual is said to do more than his duty if he does more than what he is legally bound to do. We know that contractual and legal relations give rise to certain definite duties, enforceable by external authority (called determinate or perfect obligations or duties), and they are popularly sometimes called 'duties' (in the narrower sense). (See Ch. XVII, § 3, also the next section in Appendix B.) If an individual performs any right act which he is *morally* bound to perform, but *not legally*, then he is supposed to do more than his duty. A clerk who works extra hours for the good of his employer, a debtor who pays off a debt barred by limitation, are said to do more than their respective duties. In Ethics, however, the word 'duty' is taken in a wider and higher sense to signify every right act which we ought to perform, whether determinate or indeterminate, whether legally obligatory or not. Hence, from the strictly moral or ethical point of view, an individual can never be said to do more than his duty.

We conclude, then, that obligation cannot be transcended. An agent may transcend 'a legal or contractual obligation'. In other words, it is possible for him to transcend the limit of what is called an artificial or determinate obligation and to do more than his duty (in the popular restricted sense).' * But he can never transcend moral obligation. Every normally constituted adult is under a moral obligation to do what is good or right under a particular set of circumstances to the best of his ability and judgment. The range of 'the good' is not wider

* Artificial, special or determinate obligations arise from the social, legal or contractual relations of men. For a full critical account of these, see § XII, 'Distinctions among duties.'

than the range of duty. 'The good' and 'the obligatory' are co-extensive. A thing is obligatory, because it is morally good. *

It may be stated in this connection that, according to Herbert Spencer, obligation will, in future, be transcended in another sense. He holds that, with the moralisation of the race, the sense of obligation which is essentially coercive will diminish and will ultimately disappear. This view has been fully discussed before. See Ch. XII, pp. 177, 178; also pp. 185, 186, 189; also Appendix B, 'Moral theory of the Evolutionists'. It will be sufficient to state here once more that, in Spencer's opinion, the sense of duty or obligation involves an element of coercion or compulsion. The feeling of coercion, associated with social, political and religious restraints, has been transformed, according to him, into a moral restraining motive (called the sense of duty or obligation) in the course of ages. "This sense of duty or obligation is transitory and will diminish as fast as moralisation increases. Persistence in performing a duty ends in making it a pleasure, and this amounts to the admission that, while at first the motive contains an element of coercion, at last this element of coercion dies out, and the act is performed without any consciousness of being *obliged* to perform it".

* If a debtor, finding his creditor hard pressed for money, pays his dues *before the time of payment*, then he transcends a legal or contractual obligation, for he does more than what is required of him by the contract. But though popularly he is supposed to do 'more than his duty', he really *does* perform what is deemed a duty from the moral standpoint. As we have already said, the word 'duty' in Moral Philosophy means every right act which should be performed, whether legally obligatory or not. Referring to this instance (cited by Dr. Martineau), Prof Mitra remarks, "To do less in such a case, by straining his rights as defined in the contract, would be, from the moral point of view, a *breach of duty*, whatever its aspect might be from the legal or social standpoint. In the particular case, duty is to be determined, not simply by reference to the terms of contract, but also by reference to the claims of benevolence. And these evidently require an early payment to meet the wants of the creditor." (*Elements of Morals*).

"With complete adaptation to the social state, that element in the moral consciousness which is expressed by the word obligation will disappear."

Thus, according to Spencer, with the complete moralisation of the race, with the perfect conciliation of the interests of the individual with those of society, laws will become superfluous and obligation meaningless, and men will then do from pure love and with delight what is beneficial to society. In short, the sense of obligation is destined to disappear ultimately.

But, as we have seen before, this theory is based on a wrong view as to the nature and origin of obligation. The sense of duty or moral obligation does not involve an element of coercion or compulsion, and it cannot disappear. With the gradual moralisation of the race, there arises a deeper sense of duty. (See p. 189).

XII. Distinctions among duties.

Much has already been written in this book on the subject of duty.* (See Ch. XVI & Ch. XXII). We proceed here to indicate the main distinctions that have been drawn among duties.

(a) *Perfect or determinate and Imperfect or indeterminate duties.*

These have been briefly explained and illustrated in Ch. XVII, § 3. Perfect or determinate duties are those obligations that are enforceable by external authority, while imperfect or indeterminate duties are those that are *not* enforceable. We know that contractual and legal relations give rise to certain duties which are capable of being enforced by society or the state ; these are known as *determinate* or *perfect duties*. Again, there are many duties or obligations which are beyond the range of external regulation and are thus incapable of being enforced. These are called *indeterminate or imperfect duties*. Thus, the payment of a debt (if not barred by limitation), the maintenance

* For the conditions of duty and responsibility and for the distinction between duty and obedience, see Appendix A, pp. xi, xii.

of public peace and order, respecting the life and property of another, are taken to be instances of perfect or determinate duties, as their performance can be legally enforced by means of penalties. But veracity, charity, gratitude &c. are imperfect or indeterminate duties, for they cannot be enforced or rendered obligatory by the state.

(*b*) *Definite and indefinite duties.*

Definite duties or obligations are so called, because they are 'definite' or precise in their nature and extent, while indefinite duties (as the very name implies) are not definite or precise, but are vague, in these respects. All duties originating from legal and contractual relations are *definite* in character and extent, while those which are based entirely upon the 'inner verdict of conscience', *i. e.*, which are enjoined simply by our moral nature, are said to be *indefinite*. Thus, the payment of a debt is a definite duty, because it is 'definite' both in respect of amount and person. The debtor has exact knowledge of the nature, extent and limit of his duty towards the creditor. Similarly, the duty of a servant towards his master is a definite duty, for it is created by a contract or mutual understanding, and the servant knows precisely what kind of duty and how much of it he is bound to do at the bidding of his master. But charity is an indefinite duty, for it rests simply on moral consciousness and is not restricted to any definite measure or person.

(*c*) *Natural and artificial duties.*

Natural duties are those that are enjoined by the moral nature of man. They arise from the *natural* moral constitution, and hence they are called *natural* duties. Thus the duties of parents and children are *natural*. Artificial duties arise from the legal and contractual relations of men. In other words, they are created by, or are based on, mere contract, mutual understanding or agreement Hence they are called *artificial*. Thus, the duty of the debtor towards the creditor is an artificial duty. Similarly, the duties of master and servant, landlord and tenant, lawyer and client, vendor and vendee, are artificial.

(d) *Common and special duties.*

Common or universal duties are always binding upon all persons alike, while special or specific duties are relative to special situations and relations ; in other words, they arise out of definite situations or relations, and are thus binding only on some persons. Thus, benevolence, justice, veracity are common duties, as they are equally obligatory on all, while the duties of master and servant, debtor and creditor, teacher and pupil, physician and patient, lawyer and client, buyer and seller, are regarded as special or specific duties.*

Criticism. A little reflection is sufficient to convince us that the above distinctions are untenable in Ethics, as they are really 'extra-moral'. Let us first consider the distinction between perfect and imperfect duties or obligations. We have seen that duties enforceable by external authority are called 'perfect', while those not so enforceable are termed 'imperfect'. But external authority is not the real ground of moral obligation. Why, then, should we say that an obligation or duty is 'imperfect', simply because it is not enforceable by external authority ? What is enjoined by our moral nature is binding or obligatory upon us, whether it is legally enforceable or not. The question whether a particular form of conduct is enforceable or not by penalty is immaterial in the moral sphere (See Ch. X). If an act is morally 'obligatory', it cannot be morally 'imperfect'. From the strictly moral standpoint, it may be said that all duties are 'perfect'—they are perfectly obligatory or binding upon all alike, when there are occasions for them. 'Duty for duty's sake', it should be remembered, is the true rule of life. The distinction between perfect and imperfect 'obligation is a *legal* or *juridic* distinction—it is evidently 'due to a confusion of the provinces of Ethics and Jurisprudence.'

* It is apparent from the above accounts that *definite duties* are *artificial obligations*, and they are at the same time more or less *special*. It is also easy to see that *indefinite* duties are *natural*, and also *common* or *universal*. Natural duties may be called *intrinsic* duties, and artificial duties may be called *extrinsic*,

Let us now briefly examine the distinction drawn between 'definite' and 'indefinite' duties. From the ethical point of view all duties are, in a sense, 'definite', as they require the performances of definite or specific acts on definite occasions.

Further, the so-called 'artificial' duties are also *natural*, for, as moral obligations, they are ultimately based on the natural moral consciousness of man. All moral duties rest on the demands of our moral nature. Any external or artificial obligation that is inconsistent with our natural moral sense cannot be looked upon as a moral duty.

Finally, all moral obligations or duties are *common* and *special* at the same time. They are *common* in the sense that they arise from the *common* moral nature of man; and they are *special*, because they are relative to definite circumstances—to the *special* situations and relations of men. (See Ap. A, p. xii).

We conclude, then, that, from the ethical point of view, all duties are perfect, definite, natural, common and special. They are all sacred and equally obligatory or binding on men.

XIII. Obligatory and Optional Morality.

It may be pointed out in this connection that Dr. Bain draws a distinction between 'obligatory morality' and 'optional morality', corresponding to the distinction between perfect and imperfect obligations (otherwise called determinate and indeterminate duties). By 'obligatory morality' he means 'compulsory morality', enforceable by external authority. By 'optional morality' he means purely voluntary virtuous conduct—moral conduct which is *not* enforceable, obligatory or legally binding.

We see, then, that enforcement by means of penalty or punishment is the source of so-called 'obligatory morality' which includes, according to Bain, "all obligations or duties strictly so called." 'Optional morality' (as the very name implies) is dependent on one's free will or volition—it indicates moral conduct left to one's *option* or choice. It thus includes 'virtuous actions which are purely voluntary'. Fulfilment of contracts, forbearance from specified injuries, may be taken as illustrations

of the former; while payment of debts barred by limitation, support of old, invalid parents, veracity, 'pure virtue, beneficence or benevolence' may be cited as instances of the latter. By pure virtue, beneficence or benevolence Dr. Bain means "all actions for the benefit of others, without stipulation, and without reward: relief of distress, promotion of the good of individuals or of society at large". Referring to benevolence he remarks, "Although morality inculcates benevolence, this is not a law proper, it is not obligatory, authoritative, or binding; it is purely voluntary, and is termed merit, virtuous and noble conduct". (*Moral Science*, p. 436). He further observes, "The act of the good Samaritan, the rescue of a ship's crew from drowning, could not be exacted; the law cannot require heroism." Such acts are, according to him, examples of 'optional morality', as they are not legally binding or obligatory.

Criticism.

(i) It is easy to see that the expressions 'obligatory morality' and 'optional morality' are quite inappropriate and misleading. Morality, in the proper sense of the term, is always obligatory or binding. Every rational agent is *morally bound* or *under a moral obligation* to do what is right and avoid what is wrong. Every right act—every act approved or enjoined by the moral nature of mankind—is morally obligatory upon us, though it may not be legally binding or enforceable by external authority. Charity, gratitude, veracity and some other virtuous and noble deeds are binding upon individuals from the moral standpoint, though falling beyond the range of external regulation. (*Vide* Appendix B, criticism of perfect and imperfect obligations, p. lxviii).

(ii) Dr. Bain speaks of 'obligatory morality' in the sense of compulsory morality enforced by penalties. But, as we have repeatedly remarked in this treatise, compulsory morality is equivalent to *no morality* at all. An act performed out of fear of punishment cannot have positive moral merit, though it may be prudentially good. (See Ch. II, § 3 & § 5; Ch. X; Appendix B, p. xxxvi).

(iii) Dr. Bain's view of 'optional morality' is inconsistent with his general theory of morality. He opines that morality is the outcome of coercion, and explains the moral by the legal, the right by what is enforced. According to him, as we have seen before, "morality is an institution of society, maintained by the authority and punishments of society". (*Emotions and Will*, p. 257). "Morality is the systematic codification of prudential and benevolent actions, rendered obligatory by what are termed penalties or punishments" (*Moral Science*). If so, how can he again speak of 'optional morality' including within it purely voluntary virtuous conduct ? The distinction drawn by him between obligatory and optional morality, and his inclusion of pure virtue, beneficence or benevolence within the latter, show clearly that he recognises a moral sphere outside the political. He admires those agents who perform benevolent acts without any hope of reward or fear of punishment, and he rightly remarks that "the highest honours of society are called into exercise by the highest services." The truth is that man is essentially a moral being, and he cannot but admire the truly 'noble' and 'heroic' deeds done in obedience to the inner voice of conscience.

Summary and concluding remarks. The distinction made by Dr. Bain between obligatory and optional morality is misleading. Morality is always obligatory. The essence of our moral life lies in the consciousness of duty or obligation, without which morality loses its significance. But moral obligation is *self-imposed*. The sense of duty or obligation does not involve any element of coercion, compulsion or constraint. Morality presupposes rational choice on the part of the agent. Moral laws state what one *ought* to do or avoid—they appeal to the free, rational nature of man.

* Cf. J. S. Mill (*Utilitarianism*, Ch. V). He classifies strict duties under the head of Justice, and adds that "there are other things, on the contrary, which we wish that people should do, which we like or admire them for doing, but yet admit that they are not bound to do ; it is not a case of moral obligation." But, as Prof. Mackenzie aptly observes, surely we have a *moral obligation* to act in the best way possible.

If political laws lose their binding force without their attendant sanctions or penalties, moral laws are impaired by any association with these. Right conduct consists in doing what is right from the conviction that it *is* right, and for the sake of its rightness.

XIV. Explanation of certain important ethical terms. (Supplementary notes).

(*a*) *Duties and virtues.*

A distinction is sometimes drawn between duties and virtues in the following way : Duties are those obligations that are capable of being definitely codified and formulated—that can be precisely defined as to their character and limits and legally enforced ; while virtues are those good, righteous or noble acts which cannot be definitely formulated and enforced by external authority. In short, duties are *determinate* obligations, and virtues are *indeterminate* obligations. As Prof. Mackenzie observes, "Sometimes those obligations which are capable of precise definition are called duties , while that part of good conduct which cannot be so definitely formulated is classed under the head of virtue—as if the virtuous man were one who did more than his duty, more than could be reasonably demanded of him." (*Manual of Ethics*, 6th edition, p. 321). Similarly Prof. Alexander remarks, "The distinctive mark of virtue seems to lie in what is beyond duty ; yet every such act must depend on the peculiar circumstances under which it is done, of which we leave the agent to be the judge, and we certainly think it his duty to do what is best". (*Moral Order and Progress*, p. 243).

Criticism. This distinction between duties and virtues is neither reasonable nor necessary from the moral standpoint. As we have remarked more than once, all morally good acts are our duties from the ethical point of view. 'The good' and 'the obligatory' are co-extensive.

(*b*) *Obligation and duty.*

In the present treatise we have used these two terms synonymously : and, in fact, they are generally used as synonymous in ethical literature. But a distinction is sometimes drawn

between them, corresponding to the distinction between perfect and imperfect obligations (or artificial and natural duties). Thus it is sometimes said that the word 'obligation' (derived from Lat. *obligo*, to bind) implies 'what one binds himself to do to another by a definite understanding, agreement or contract'. Obligations, therefore, are legal or contractual—they are mere accidents arising from conventional or contractual arrangements. 'Duty' implies what is due from one person to another on account of the essential nature of man as a moral and social being. Duties are thus based on the moral nature of men—they are inseparable from the natural moral constitution of human beings. We speak, for example, of the duties of parents and children, but we talk of the obligations of a debtor, a tenant, a vendor, or a solicitor.

Criticism. This distinction is not at all tenable in Moral Philosophy. All obligations approved by conscience or man's moral reason are moral duties, and all duties are obligatory or binding on men. The two terms 'obligation' and 'duty' should, therefore, be used as synonymous. It should be carefully borne in mind that the sense of moral obligation or duty is the cardinal fact of moral life.

(*d*) *Obedience and disobedience*,

The term 'obedience' as used in Ethics means dutifulness; while 'disobedience' implies wilful neglect of duty or refusal to obey the moral laws. Thus obedience signifies the fulfilment of moral obligation—the act of freely and rationally obeying the self-imposed moral law—the actual performance of what is judged to be the duty in any particular case—the practical acceptance of the claim of Moral Law as the guide of life, and the consequent regulation of conduct in accordance with the law. Obedience and disobedience presuppose knowledge of moral distinctions and self-determination or freedom of choice. Uniform and habitual obedience develops that inner excellence of character which is called virtue, and virtue in its turn renders subsequent obedience easy and agreeable. Thus the order of events in normal moral development is the following :—(1) a

theoretical recognition of duty; (ii) obedience or the actual performance of duty; (iii) formation of a virtuous character.

(*d*) *Desert, merit and demerit.*

The term 'desert' is connected with the word 'deserve'. It is a generic term, implying both merit and demerit. Desert is either good or bad, but merit is always good. Hence the word 'desert' is often qualified by the epithets 'good' and 'bad' (or 'ill'). We speak of good and bad (or ill) desert, meaning thereby merit and demerit (or guilt).

The terms 'merit' and 'demerit' as used in Ethics have been fully explained in Chapter XVII of this book.

A distinction is drawn between good desert and merit by some moralists. Dr. Martineau, for instance, observes, "We might obtain appropriate terms for the distinction which we have to mark, by using the word '*desert*' (qualified, if needful, by the epithets 'good' or 'bad') when including what lies within the sphere of pledged duty, and reserving the word '*merit*' for what lies beyond it" (*Types of Ethical Theory*, Vol. II, p. 245). If a person fulfils a contract, he is said to have good desert only, but no merit in the proper sense of the term; but if, out of goodness or generosity, he does more than what he is legally bound to do by the contract, he is said to acquire merit by the action.

We see, then, that, according to some writers, performance of an indeterminate duty yields real merit. A man who performs an ordinary determinate or pledged duty has, according to them, merely good desert, but no true merit.

In fact, there is a tendency now-a-days to restrict the terms 'merit' and 'virtue' to superior or exceptional moral excellence manifested in doing, amidst great difficulties, what is morally good or noble. If a person discharges his duties under great difficulties, he is said to earn merit for his actions. If, in the face of a strong temptation, a man does what is right, or if he sacrifices his wealth and health and risks his life in promoting the welfare of humanity, he is deemed virtuous and meritorious.

But the above distinction between desert and merit is morally untenable and useless. Every right action is meritorious from

the moral standpoint, though the degree of merit varies with the agent's strength of will, the nature of the act performed by him, and the circumstances under which the act is done.*

(*e*) *Conscientiousness and over-conscientiousness.*

By the term 'conscientiousness' we mean the habit of acting with due regard to conscience. A truly conscientious man is one who habitually acts in obedience to the inner voice of his conscience. He is just, dutiful, righteous, and possesses a strong sense of moral responsibility. He decides every question of duty by a careful survey of facts and circumstances. He asks himself whether his actions are such as they should be. He often reflects upon his inner life—his own desires, motives and intentions, and examines his own character. He tries to ascertain whether the general principles of his conduct are right, whether he habitually acts in the best *spirit* as well as in the best *manner*. But he is not too much occupied with such thoughts and enquiries. He avoids over-analysis, too minute scrutiny or subtle examination which is the evidence of a morbid habit of mind and which usually induces inaction or idleness. He is neither unscrupulous nor over-scrupulous. Idle scrupulosity is no part of his character. His judgments are neither hasty nor tardy. He is a man of action and does not shrink from discharging even the humblest duties of life. Honest, sincere and active, he gladly performs his duties—high and low—to the best of his judgment and ability. "He is *in* the world, and yet, in a

* Merit is sometimes defined as "the quality of having deserved praise" or as "the excellence that deserves honour or reward." Some writers assert that "merit is but proved virtue." "A man's intrinsic merit", remarks Leslie Stephen, "is not merely proportioned to his virtue, but is his virtue considered under a particular aspect, namely, as causing the moral approval of his fellows, and that the merit of an action means simply his proved virtue, that virtue, namely, which he must possess in order to do the action in question." (*Science of Ethics*, p. 266).

sense, *not of it.*" Of him may be rightly said what Wordsworth said of Milton :—

"Thy soul was like a star and dwelt apart ;
*   *   *   *   *
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay."

(*Sonnet to Milton*).

We have indicated above the main characteristics of a really conscientious person. It should be borne in mind that the term 'conscientiousness' is used in several senses :—(*i*) an impartial estimate of moral principles, without any bias or prejudice ; (*ii*) a careful, scrupulous or anxious survey of facts—a minute scrutiny of circumstances—for the determination of duties ; (*iii*) carefulness with regard to one's own external conduct ; (*iv*) an anxious and scrupulous self-examination—a careful reflection upon one's own inner life.

We are now in a position to understand clearly the meaning of 'over-conscientiousness'. It implies 'too much conscientiousness or scrupulosity'—an extreme, morbid or unhealthy form of conscientiousness. The different forms of conscientiousness described above may transcend their limits and bring about the morbid mental states coming under the head of over-conscientiousness. It is easy to see that over-conscientiousness involves over-analysis, subtle examination, or extremely minute and painful scrutiny, and so it often leads to hesitation, indecision and reprehensible inaction. It may even serve as an excuse for indolence and neglect of duties. As D' Arcy points out, "Scrutiny of the circumstances of each case as it arises may be so painfully minute as to cause hesitation and want of decision. Anxiety to examine the case thoroughly may become so extreme that activity may be paralysed and the good left undone. Or, again, trivial cases may be treated with the same scrupulous care as important ones.....And so it may happen that what the healthily conscientious man would decide in a moment, the morbidly conscientious man may find too hard for decision." (*A Short Study of Ethics*, p. 155).

The foregoing remarks make it clear that over-conscientiousness is not a happy or desirable state of mind. It has been rightly remarked that "over-conscientiousness is no security for a virtuous life." A truly virtuous man is conscientious, but not 'over-conscientious' or 'too conscientious'. Too much of anything, as the proverb says, is improper and blameworthy. Too much conscientiousness—too minute self-examination or scrutiny of circumstances—causes lack of decision and paralyses activity. If a man is too reflective, but not as active as he should be, he may become an object of ridicule. A man of this type is said to be "so good that he is good for nothing".

To sum up : The word "over-conscientious" means extremely or morbidly conscientious. It has thus become a term of reproach. A healthily conscientious person is one in whom we find a harmonious combination of reflective and active habits. He is not too much occupied with self-examination or scrutiny of circumstances. He avoids the two extreme tendencies, *viz.*, unscrupulousness and over-scrupulousness, and follows the golden mean. A man of action and reflection, he lays upon himself even the humblest duties of ordinary life.

XV. Beginning and growth of moral consciousness.

§ 1. Preliminary remarks. Moral nature of man.

It is a well-known fact that man is essentially a moral being. He is endowed, not only with self-consciousness, but also with what is called *moral consciousness* or the consciousness of right and wrong, obligation and responsibility. Ethics, as the science of morality, gives an expository analysis of moral consciousness which is an extremely complex phenomenon, a complete psychosis, involving intellectual or cognitive, emotional or sentimental, and volitional or active factors. It is in the process of analysing and explaining this complex tissue of consciousness that Ethics has to confront the various problems which it undertakes to solve. Hence Ethics is sometimes defined as the "Philosophy of moral consciousness".

Now, much has already been said in the present treatise about the nature, contents and development of moral conscious-

ness. (*Vide* Chs. V, XX & XXIV). A few additional remarks are made here about its origin and growth. As is well-known, moral consciousness, like other aspects of human life, passes through a steady process of development, both in the individual and in the race. Let us here deal with its development in the race.

In discussing the problem of the beginning and growth of moral consciousness, we should bear in mind that human nature is essentially moral, and that the germs of morality are inherent in it from the very beginning. We assume at the outset that the ground of morality lies in the very constitution of the human mind. Morality cannot arise out of non-moral elements, just as a positive quantity can never be made up by the addition of negative ones. The latent moral nature of man gradually unfolds itself with the accumulation of experience. Evolutionists of the Spencerian School are wrong in supposing that the moral consciousness of man has been evolved out of non-moral experience. Evolution cannot create anything new—it can only gradually unfold or manifest what was potential and implicit before. It cannot, therefore, derive the moral out of the non-moral—it cannot call into being a moral nature where there was a blank before. The influence of environment, the needs of human beings in the struggle for existence, their various biological and social requirements, cannot *create* morality even in the course of countless generations ; they can only *prompt* mental and moral development. In the eyes of the moralist, man is, from the first moment of his existence, potentially, if not actually, a moral being. "Moral progress", as Prof. Seth rightly remarks, "is morality in progress, 'progressive morality' ; never, at any stage, a progress *to* morality, or a progress from the non-moral to the moral stage." (*A Study of Ethical Principles*, p. 318)*

* The same writer adds :—"If man started on his career as a non-moral being, he could never become moral, any more than he could make any intellectual attainments if he were not from the first an intellectual being...A theory which seeks to explain the origin of morality by reference to a pre-moral condition, to which morality stands in anti-thesis, condemns itself by its very statement...If the origin and natural state were *homo homini lupus*, the 'ape and tiger' nature would

A careful study of the history of human civilization convinces us that morality in some form or other has always been a factor of human life. When we investigate the manners and customs, the usages and practices, of the primitive races of mankind, we find that they have never been without some consciousness of a distinction between good and evil, between things which should be done and those which are to be avoided. It is true that they are not found to possess the same abstract, refined and elevated moral notions and sentiments as are noticed amongst the enlightened races. It is also true that many superstitious practices, many cruel and immoral rites, are often discovered amongst the lowest savages; still even these tribes are not totally destitute of the rudiments of morality.[*] They, too,

never give place to the gentleness and love of the moral world. It is as true in the sphere of morality as in that of nature or knowledge, that the seeds of the latest fruits of the evolutionary process must be already present in the first stages of that process. *Ex nihilo nihil fit.* It is also and equally true in all these spheres that we find in the later stages the fuller manifestation of the essential nature whose evolution we are tracing, that the latest is the truest. As the oak is the truth of the acorn, so is the man of ripe culture and refinement the truth dimly prefigured in the primeval savage." (*Ibid.*, pp. 318-319).

Dr Westermarck, an eminent sociologist and moralist, sums up the results of his enquiry into the history of moral ideas in the following words : —"When we examine the moral rules of uncivilised races, we find that they in a very large measure resemble those prevalent among nations of culture. In many savage communities homicide is prevented by custom, and so is theft. Savages also regard charity as a duty and praise generosity as a virtue. Many uncivilised races are conspicuous for their aversion to telling lies." (*Origin and Development of moral ideas*). He is, however, careful to point out that "there is a considerable difference between the regard for life, property, truth and the general well-being of a neighbour which displays itself in primitive rules of morality, and that which is among ourselves." (*Ibid*).

He also remarks, "Various data prove that the lower races have some feeling of justice, the flower of all moral feelings. And the supposition that remorse is unknown to them is not only unfounded, but contradicted by facts......To suppose that savages are entirely without conscience is quite contrary to what we may infer from the great regard in which they hold their customs, as also contrary to the direct statements of travellers who have taken some pains to examine the matter" (*Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 124).

have their instinctive moral aversions and preferences. As pointed out by ethnologists, savages are endowed with an implicit sense of obligation and responsibility, and they strictly follow the manners and customs prevalent in their communities. Punishments are inflicted on those members of a tribe that violate its traditions Parental affection, simplicity or frankness, aversion to falsehood, unquestioning loyalty and obedience to their chiefs, tendency to promote tribal interests, courage, sense of justice, and hospitality are some of the virtues possessed by uncivilised and semi-civilised races of mankind. The truth is that man is essentially a social being, and the germs or beginnings of social and moral laws are discernible wherever there is the nucleus of society. As society has been in existence from the very beginning of human life, morality in some form has always been present along with it.

The foregoing remarks make it clear that even the savages are not completely devoid of rudimentary moral notions and sentiments. When, again, we compare the ethical notions of ancient civilised races, we are surprised to find striking points of similarity. The diversity of moral judgments is much less than is supposed. As Janet rightly points out, "It is surprising how, amid great differences in time, place, and material circumstances, man has yet been everywhere so nearly the same. The moral legislators of the Hindoos, the Chinese, the Persians, the Hebrews, and the Greeks have all form strikingly 'similar ideas of human morality; and the more closely we study the civilisations of these different peoples, the more closely we see similitude in diversity, the mor numerous we find the ideas held in common amid all apparent contradictions." (*Theory of Morals* p 333).

We see, then, that morality is deeply engrained in human constitution. It is practically co-extensive with human life and history. In all the different stages of human civilization, it is found that men not only act in particular ways, but also in various ways indicate their views that particular kinds of action are right and others are wrong. It should be borne in mind that morality is at first everywhere 'customary', but it gradually

becomes more and more 'reflective' with the general development of human mind.

§ 2. (a) The stage of Customary Morality. (Custom as the standard & guide. Early group life. Group Morality).

We may now indicate more adequately the general nature of moral development.

A careful enquiry into the history of moral ideas convinces us that morality starts from tribal customs. The moral life of man develops from customary action, founded partly on imitation and suggestion, to the stage of independent reflective choice. In primitive communities there is no distinction between moral conduct and customary observance; the two are apparently identical. The rule of custom is the rule of duty at early stages of moral evolution. A savage is a member of a tribe, and his life is hedged about by customary observances which imply the beginning of moral activities. To the primitive man, the tradition of the tribe, clan or group is the rule of right and wrong, the seat of authority is custom, established usage, public opinion.

What, then, is exactly meant by a custom? What are its main characteristics? A custom may be roughly defined as a settled habit of action, a mode of action developed in a community and adopted by it as obligatory It is a public habit which is deemed obligatory or binding on the members of a community. As Dr Westermarck observes, "A custom, in the strict sense of the word, is not merely the habit of a certain circle of men, but at the same time involves a moral rule. There is a close connection between these two characteristics of custom; its habitualness and its obligatoriness......The unreflecting mind has a tendency to disapprove of any deviation from it......Children show respect for the customary, and so do savages." (*Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 159).

How, then, do customs arise? Do we find in them any beginning of morality? As far as we can see, certain modes of action naturally grow up in the life of a people. Some of these modes of action appear good or beneficial to the tribe—they seem to be favourable to its welfare, and thus tend, on the

whole, to be approved, selected, and retained. In course of time they become engrained in the minds of the people as settled or fixed habits of action and are handed down to posterity as tribal customs, usages or practices.

In such customs or practices we find the beginning of morality—the germs of the sense of duty and the spirit of self-sacrifice. The primitive man, as already pointed out, looks upon customs as binding on him. He is averse to all acts against tribal interests, and is even ready to sacrifice his personal interests in promoting the welfare of the tribe. In the words of Mr. Clifford, he has what may be called 'a tribal self'. He looks upon himself only as a member of his tribe. His life is identified with that of the social group, tribe or clan to which he belongs. "Of himself as an independent individual, or of others as independent individuals, he has not yet formed any clear conception." The individual almost instinctively follows those lines of conduct that promote the welfare of his tribe and avoids those that harm it. Even a very low savage may be said to be guided or moved by the implicit idea of a larger, social or tribal self, when, instead of appropriating to himself the whole amount of the booty or the food secured by him, he submits it to the head of the family, tribe or clan for apportionment.

We are now in a position to understand more adequately the solidarity of primitive moral consciousness. It evidently involves the idea of tribal unity. Among the primitive races of mankind, the good is conceived as a good for the tribe. A savage, of course, does not deliberately ask himself whether his conduct is or is not conducive to tribal good. He instinctively or semi-consciously subordinates his desires to the welfare of the whole tribe, otherwise there would be no community. He puts himself, so to speak, at the point of view of the tribe to which he belongs.

It is clear from the above that the ethical unit of the earliest times is a social group—the family, tribe, clan or community. The primitive form of judgement on conduct, expressing itself in rewards and punishments, implies essentially approbation or

approval of what strengthens the tribe and disapprobation or disapproval of what weakens it.* Conduct is guided by custom which is taken to be the moral standard. Customary observance is the essence of moral conduct. Hence the primitive stage may be called the stage of "customary and group morality."†

(b) The stage of Reflective morality. Guidance of conduct by laws (political and moral).

The stage of morality described above may fairly be called 'unreflective.' In this stage men blindly follow the customs and usages that have naturally grown up. There is hardly any independent thinking or reflective choice, and the feeling of moral indignation is not sufficiently strong. The idea of a general judgment on character has scarcely emerged in this stage. Primitive people hardly think of inner disposition and character. They judge overt acts and omissions by reference

* "From the tribal point of view, the consciousness of the primitive savage passes judgment both on himself and others as individuals within the tribe. And on the whole, actions are judged to be good or bad, and individuals to be praiseworthy or blameworthy, according as they tend to promote or impede the existence and welfare of the tribe" (Prof. Mackenzie, *Manual of Ethics*, 6th Edition, pp. 96, 97). He holds that the germ of moral conduct is found in the gregarious instinct of lower animals.

† Cf. Seth, *Ethical Principles*, pp. 319-20: "From the first, man is a social being; the tribe or the family is the unit, and the individual has no interests apart from the tribal and domestic interests in which he shares. Apart from this social relation, he would be a mere fragment, an unreal abstraction which the primitive mind is unable to conceive. This relation prescribes to him the law of his conduct, and any breach of the law is visited with such penalties as the instinct of self-preservation teaches the primitive society. The transformation of the tribe, with its unformulated social requirements, into the state, with its written laws, comes later, but does not essentially alter the situation; it only makes explicit what had before been implicit. The social relation, whether tribal, domestic or political, is essentially a moral relation, and the consciousness of these wider relations and of their claim upon the individual life is the consciousness of moral obligation".

to tribal traditions and interests. Morality, according to them, consists merely in obedience to the established customs.

In course of time, with the gradual development of mind, an important change takes place in the life of a people. Definite laws or rules of action come to be formulated and enforced, and they begin to play an important part in the guidance of conduct. The moral judgment of the people at this stage undergoes a modification. The distinction between right and wrong is now made more precise. A definite standard of action is set up, "which serves to each man both as a rule of life for himself and a rule of criticism upon his neighbours." The good and the bad, the virtuous and the vicious, are marked off ; feelings of respect are felt for the former class, and hatred for the other.

All these changes imply a considerable amount of intellectual and moral progress. They indicate a substantial development of reflective power, a deepening of the moral consciousness of man. In framing and enforcing laws, the legislators are guided by considerations of social utility as well as by a growing sense of justice and equity.

But the moral consciousness of a people cannot be said to be adequately developed, unless and until there is a transition from the external to the internal view of morality, and a distinction is clearly drawn between the positive laws of the land and universal moral laws (*Vide* pp. 16-17, also p. 261). The laws of the former class, as we know, are externally imposed and made obligatory by penalties ; those of the latter class, being revealed by conscience, are self-imposed and deemed obligatory for their own sake. The former aim at material prosperity —they are primarily directed against outward acts detrimental to social welfare ; the latter aim at improvement of character or, as it is sometimes called, 'purification of the heart'. Now, in the life of a progressive race, this distinction gradually emerges. It is gradually understood that the inner purpose and character, and not the outward acts (with their consequences), constitute the proper object of moral judgement. The idea of a 'pure heart' substitutes itself for external observances. It is felt more and more that moral principles should be obeyed

for their own sake—that 'duty for duty's sake' should be the true rule of life.

It is in the above ways that morality becomes more and more reflective, the moral consciousness deeper and deeper. At this stage the validity of accepted manners and customs is sometimes questioned, and the real basis of moral judgment investigated. Hence the necessity for a deeper reflection soon arises. Moreover, when old customs, political laws and moral principles co-exist, conflicts amongst them often arise. The ultimate result of such a conflict is further ethical reflection, and an attempt is made to construct a scientific system of Ethics. Broad universal moral principles, applicable to all times and races, are formulated, and there is an effort to discover the supreme end of human life.

We see, then, that, in the final stage, reflective morality is substituted for customary observance.

But here we should guard ourselves against a possible misapprehension. Though, in the life of a progressive people, morality becomes more and more reflective, yet we must not suppose that men are ever guided wholly by 'reflective principles' or ethical notions formed through reflection. Even in the most advanced or enlightened communities, the notions by which people guide themselves are derived partly from reflection and partly from 'the social or spiritual atmosphere'.

* Dr. Bosanquet says that the development is from "moral ideas" to "ideas about morality"—*i e.*, from vague, implicit or ordinary moral notions (derived from tradition) to explicit ethical notions or concepts founded on reflection. He points out that the transition is from an implicit knowledge of moral quality to an explicit grasp of moral principles and of the supreme end or ideal. It may be pointed out here that 'the ideas about morality' are called 'ethical ideas' by Dr. Mackenzie. He says: "A man may guide himself by the conception of a clearly-defined end, such as the attainment of happiness or perfection, and may adapt his whole line of conduct to the attainment of this. In such a case, he is guided by an ethical idea or by an idea about morality, *i.e.*, by an idea formed through reflection upon the nature of the moral end. But a moral idea need not be of this

Before concluding this section, we should once more point out that moral development implies 'a gradual widening of the scope of virtue'—a transition from particularism to universalism, from patriotism or nationalism to humanism or cosmopolitanism. The scopes of virtues like justice and benevolence are at first 'intra-tribal'; later on, their scopes become 'inter-national' and 'cosmopolitan'. With moral progress, family affection expands into patriotism, and patriotism into philanthropy or humanitarianism. (*Vide* pp. 262-263).

character. A moral idea may be got, as it is sometimes put, out of our 'spiritual atmosphere'. The idea, for instance, of the kind of conduct which fits a 'gentleman' or a 'Christian' is not, as a rule, derived from any definite reflection on the nature of the moral end, but is rather acquired through tradition and experience. It is important, then, to remember that a man may be guided by moral ideas, though he has never definitely reflected upon the nature of morality" (*Manual of Ethics*, p. 90).

We see, then, that Prof. Mackenzie draws a nice and subtle distinction between 'moral ideas' and 'ethical ideas'. But in common parlance and in ordinary ethical literature, the two expressions are often used as synonymous.

Spencer points out that, in the case of savage peoples, 'internal amity' usually means 'external enmity'. He means to say that savages generally care only for the welfare of the tribe to which they belong, but are at enmity with other tribes. "Moral progress takes place", as D' Arcy remarks, 'by means of the widening of the social area. The tribe extends till it becomes the nation or state."..."Now it seems a mere commonplace to talk of the human family, or the brotherhood of mankind, or the universal fatherhood of God, or to speak of heathen or savage peoples or unbelievers as of persons possessed of rights equally well founded with our own. Yet these commonplaces are a mark of ethical advance more striking, more convincing, than perhaps any others which exist". (*A Short Study of Ethics*).

Cf. A. C. Mitra, *Elements of Morals*, p. 194: "When the moral horizon widens, benevolence will include within its pale the whole mankind, and even the animal creation, while the earlier estimate might have included only friends and neighbours, or members of the same clan. The later thus includes the earlier, though the earlier is not co-extensive with the later." "In the fully developed stage, the

From the above sketch it is clear that evolution is at work in the field of morality, but moral evolution or progress does not imply a passage from the non-moral to the moral stage. It signifies a transition

(1) from a lower stage of morality to a higher one—from an implicit knowledge of moral quality to an explicit grasp of ethical principles—from 'moral ideas' to 'ideas about morality';

(2) from an external to an internal view of morality;

(3) from 'customary' to 'reflective' morality—from the customary observances, usages and practices of particular tribes and nations to an understanding and formulation of universal moral principles applicable to all peoples or races;

(4) from a narrower to a wider scope of virtue.

We may say, then, that "the course of moral progress is from potentiality to actuality, from the outer to the inner, from the form to the spirit, from a narrow or contracted to a liberal and comprehensive estimate of duties and virtues."*

XVI. Custom and morality. Ethos. Concluding remarks.

In the preceding section we have found that primitive races are guided by tribal customs, and that moral progress implies a transition from customary to reflective morality. But we are not to suppose that only uncivilised or savage peoples have customs. Every community or society is governed by certain rules or laws which are called social manners and customs. They are sanctioned and enforced by common opinion, though without any formal legal enactment. Being the results of collective reason and experience of a society, they are beneficial to it at a particular stage of its development.

What, then, is the precise relation of social manners and customs to morality? A little reflection is sufficient to convince

world is viewed as a 'City of God', in which all its members are bound together by sacred ties." (*Ibid.*, p. 196). See also Seth's *Ethical Principles*, p. 347, for the reconciliation of patriotism with universal benevolence or cosmopolitanism.

* It has been remarked by Prof. James Seth that "moral progress is, in sum and substance, the progressive discovery of the individual." For the explanation of this statement, see pp. 270-271 of this book.

us that they represent the social morality—the general moral spirit—of the community in which they are prevalent, and influence the moral character and conduct of its individual members. It is from the social manners and customs that an individual receives his first moral training.* Yet they are not absolutely binding on the individual. A person may be wiser than his generation. He may rise above the social morality of his time and discover the inadequacy or evil character of the prevailing customs. If so, he is justified in transgressing them.

We conclude, then, that the social customs should not be viewed as too sacred to be ever violated. A blind veneration for old, worn-out and decayed usages and practices may hinder social and moral progress. Indeed, it is a well-known fact that what is customary is not necessarily good from the moral or even from the utilitarian point of view. Hence the necessity for social reform sometimes arises.

*Even those that are called 'heroes', 'supermen', great men or men of genius—prophets, reformers, teachers and leaders of humanity—are not altogether independent of social influence. They, too, as Hegel says, are 'suckled at the breast of the universal ethos' and are 'children of their times'. For a full account of their relation to society, see Ch. xx, § 8. The term 'ethos' may be briefly defined as the moral and spiritual atmosphere of a community. It implies the common moral spirit of a community—the general character of a people—as expressed in its social, political and religious laws and institutions. "The ethos of a people", says Prof. Mackenzie, "is partly expressed in definite commands and precepts. But partly also it consists in recognised habits of action and standards of judgment which have never been precisely formulated." (*Manual of Ethics*, p. 880). Such an ethos has sometimes been interpreted from the Hegelian standpoint as an expression of the World-will or the Ethical Principle at work in Nature. The term 'Zeit-geist' is sometimes used to signify 'the spirit of the age'.

A few words may be said here about the expressions 'group will' and 'group morality'. By these terms we mean 'the will and morality of social groups.' We have already explained the nature of customary group morality of primitive savages. Civilised human beings are also always members of groups of a more or less extensive kind—a family, a nation, a trade or profession, and the groups to which they belong may act rightly or wrongly, just as the individuals who compose the groups may.

Note.

It may be stated in this connection that, in the opinion of many thoughtful writers, individual self-assertion against the established manners and customs of society is not always justifiable The social laws of civilised communities are mostly founded on the moral intuition .of what is right. They are generally products of the collective experience, moral insight and wisdom of many generations. Hence conformity to them is, in the majority of cases, desirable from the moral and prudential points of view. It is not proper for ordinary men to disregard lightly the current opinions on moral and social subjects. Such persons should not be left to the guidance of individual caprice. They should (to quote the words of Hegel) live agreeably to the Ethos of their community. As Burke observes in his 'Reflections on the French Revolution':—"We are afraid to put men to live and trade each on his own private stock of reason, because we believe that the stock in each man is small, and that the individuals would do better to avail themselves of the general bank and capital of nations and of ages". Similarly, Bradley remarks, "We should consider whether the encouraging of oneself in having opinions of one's own, in the sense of thinking differently from the world on moral subjects, be not, in any person other than a heaven-born prophet, sheer self-conceit" (*Ethical Studies*, p. 200). He even goes so far as to declare emphatically that the man who seeks to have a higher morality than that of his world is on the threshold of immorality.

Thus, according to these thinkers, respect for social order is a duty. Wisdom and virtue, they say, consist in living agreeably to the Ethos. The subject cannot be fully discussed in an elementary ethical treatise like the present one. We may here simply remark that this view involves an element of truth. The ethos of a community, generally speaking, helps the moral development of individuals; it furnishes them with their standard of morality. No attempt should be made to pull down or demolish rashly old customs and institutions, simply because they are old; for they are often the results of collective experience and wisdom of ages. An excessive love of novelty, a passion for changing ancient usages and institutions, is often as injurious to society as a blind veneration for whatever is old. It must, however, be admitted that morality is progressive, and that the manners and customs even of civilised communities are not always as good as they should be. Hence there arises the necessity for social reform. But the views of 'reformers' should, in all cases, be subjected to careful and searching criticism. As Prof. Mackenzie aptly observes, "The Ethos of a people

is not a stationary thing. It develops, like social life generally; and its development is brought about by the constant effort of the best members of a race to reach a higher standard of life than that which they find current among them.....While, then, it is on the whole true that the Ethos of our people furnishes us with our moral standard, it must yet be remembered that it is often desirable to elevate that standard itself by the further development of our conception of Value." (*Manual of Ethics*. pp. 332, 333). "Wisdom is justified of all her children; and 'those who are now recognised as having been among the wisest and best were not always the most faithful to the traditions of their own people. Still, it is right enough that the new prophets should be subjected to careful criticism, and that we should recognise, in general, that 'this wise world of ours is mainly right'" (*Ibid.*, p. 351).
